



Hungary



THE MODERN WORLD

A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL FORCES

Edited by Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher, F.R.S.

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HUNGARY

By

C. A. MACARTNEY

With a Foreword by

H. A. L. FISHER
P.C., D.C.L.

London
Ernest Benn Limited

1914

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN.



FOREWORD

THE place which Hungary has held in the esteem of the British Public has within the last century been subject to sharp and startling variations. In the forties of the last century Hungarian stock stood very high. In the nineties it had fallen very low. Now it experiences a sensible recovery. The days when Kossuth divided with Garibaldi the enthusiasm of mid-Victorian liberals are barely beyond the reach of a long memory. Then Hungary spoke to every sentimental British heart as a gallant nation rightly struggling to be free. The fact that the Hungarians possessed a parliament and county councils dating back like our own self-governing institutions to the Middle Ages, that they had been long restive under the autocratic rule of Metternich, that they did not scruple to draw the sword against a powerful enemy, and that after a brave struggle against superior numbers they were finally crushed by the intervention of a Russian army, all these circumstances combined to commend the Hungarian cause to a liberty-loving and Russophobe nation. The Shakespearean eloquence of Kossuth, the great Hungarian liberal, who acted as the missionary of his countrymen in England, helped to deepen this favourable impression. Kossuth spoke the language of English liberalism to a generation of Englishmen who had not lost their faith in freedom. Even the draymen of Barclay's Brewery shared the general enthusiasm for the Hungarian effort and the general sorrow at the miscarriage of the Hungarian hopes.

Half a century passed. The relations of Hungary with Austria were eased by the establishment of

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the Dual system under which, as Beust observed to Andrassy, "you manage your barbarians while we manage ours." Unfortunately "the barbarians" presented a problem which neither of the two ruling races was in a position to solve. The Czechs chafed under the Austrians; the Slovaks, Serbs, and Roumanians were restless under the Magyars. In the rising tide of racialism the sympathies of England swung round from the governors to the governed, from the oppressors to the oppressed. At a critical moment a young Scottish scholar came upon the scene, bringing to the examination of Hungarian problems a fresh and pertinacious Scottish mind and a scrupulous Scottish conscience. The methods of the Hungarian Government were very far from meeting with the approval of Professor Seton Watson. Volume after volume proceeded from his industrious and candid pen. The secret was out. The bitter cry of the minor nationalities of the Hungarian kingdom was made audible in Europe, and awoke in Chicago, the second biggest Czech city of the world, an answering echo. Chicago is not far from Washington as American distances go. Mr. Charles R. Crane was not unknown to Mr. Wilson. In due time the establishment of Czecho-Slovakia figured among the war aims of the American President, whose statue confronts the visitor as he descends from the railway station at Prague. It is altogether just that the name of Wilson should be thus honoured. He was one of the founders of Czecho-Slovakia, the strongest of the States which has been built upon the ruins of the old Hungary.

Now English opinion veers round again. The misfortunes of Hungary under the Treaty of Trianon are well ventilated, the grievances of the oppressed nationalities under the *ancien régime* have passed

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out of remembrance. Englishmen are in a mood to consider, without much inner knowledge of the facts, proposals to revise the Hungarian frontier in a sense more agreeable to the patent stress of economic facts and to the passionate desires of the Magyar people.

Mr. Macartney's clear, judicious, and well-informed volume should help materially to instruct and clarify British public opinion upon a problem which gives concern to every Foreign Office in Europe, and all the more by reason of the author's manifest sympathy with this stalwart Asiatic people who have remained so true to type for a thousand years and have played so valiant a part in the defence of Europe against the Moslem peril. The Magyars are indeed Asiatics, but whereas the Turks and Spanish Arabs, who were settled on European soil, remained impervious to Christian influence, the Magyars at the very threshold of their history were brought into the fold of the Latin Church. Accordingly they have never since the days of King Stephen been regarded as aliens in Europe. No Hitler has demanded their expulsion or suppression on the plea that they do not belong to the Aryan race. Not even the Basque is more secure of his place in Europe.

Apart from race, two obstacles divide the Hungarians from their neighbours. The first is social. In a wide ocean of peasant properties, Rouman or Slav, Hungary is an island of large estates owned and governed by one of the proudest aristocracies of Europe. Societies so violently contrasted make ill neighbours. Indeed there are those who say that only after an agrarian revolution in Hungary can the deeper problems of the Mid-Danubian region receive their solution.

Then there is the Hungarian language, very

difficult, and save to a few foreign specialists wholly unintelligible, but ever since the political movement of the forties most jealously and ardently cherished as a symbol of nationality. It is true that the leading nobles of Hungary are apt to know many languages. Few persons who attended the proceedings of the Peace Conference will be likely to forget the brilliant fluency of the venerable Count Apponyi, the Hungarian Gladstone, as he was sometimes called, in the leading languages of Western Europe; but the accomplishments of a distinguished aristocracy do not really fill the gap. To the British traveller unversed in the mysteries of Turanian philology, the soul of Hungary remains a closed book, and so, but for a few intrepid English scholars who, undeterred by the formidable difficulties of a language which offers no points of contact with non-Turanian tongues, have, like Mr. Macartney, addressed themselves to the syntax, the vocabulary, and the pronunciation of the Hungarian language, it must always remain. What Mr. Macartney, however, has brought back from his voyage into this little known territory is here plainly set forth for our instruction.

H. A. L. FISHER.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

MANY places in Central Europe are differently named by the various local nationalities. As this is a book about Hungary, I have used throughout the Magyar name for all places situated in the old Hungary (except when a conventional English version exists, e.g. Danube). A concordance is appended to the end of this book, giving the alternative names for places in the Successor States mentioned in these pages, to which I have added a few commonly used German names for places in Trianon Hungary. For proper names I have again used the Magyar version, except in the case of kings and saints, who are more familiar to us under the Anglicized versions of their names. I have appended to the concordance the English equivalents of a few common Magyar names.

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HUNGARY

I

HUNGARY is quite unlike any other country in Europe. It lies almost in the heart of our continent, and for centuries has belonged politically to the great bloc of Central European powers. Nevertheless, its historical role is the very antithesis of that of a "central power". The central power is surrounded by its likes, which it divides as a wall, or unites as a bridge. Hungary has ever been a frontier State. She is one of two things, and both of them at once: a bulwark of the West against the invading East, a spear-head of the East thrust into the heart of the shrinking West.

And the Magyars are unlike any race in Europe. In them, two continents have fused into a compound which has something of each, yet is not identical with either. For good or evil, their qualities, which their institutions faithfully reflect, are all their own; and they are, humanly speaking, immutable.

It is amusing to read the earliest written description of the nation—travel-jottings by an Arab trader of the ninth century, who had penetrated in search of ermines and sables for the Vanity Fair of Baghdad to the Caspian Steppes where the Magyars of his day still pitched their tents.

"The Magyars," so the terse description runs, "are a race of Turks and their leader rides out with 20,000 horsemen. They have a plain which is all dry herbage and a wide territory. . . . They have completely subjugated the Slavs, and they

always order them to provide food for them and consider them as their slaves. . . . These Magyars are a handsome people and of good appearance, and their clothes are of silk brocade, and their weapons of silver encrusted with gold. They constantly plunder the Slavs."

Eleven hundred years have gone by since these pregnant words were penned. The Magyars have long since forsaken the Don and the Volga for the Danube and the Tisza. Instead of tents of pelt, palaces and cathedrals stud their land, and their capital vies for comfort and the up-to-date devices of civilization with any great modern city. Themselves, they have for a thousand years participated in the cultural life of Western Europe, not only as beneficiaries of its gifts, but as honourable artisans of its structure. Yet it is still possible to-day to recognize that old Arab's description as essentially truthful, and to applaud down the ages the correctness of his eye. Their fine and manly appearance, their proverbial predilection for plundering Slavs, their habit of considering other people as their slaves and ordering them to provide them with food—what else, in sum, is the burden of the innumerable books and pamphlets, for the Magyars or against them, which have poured from the presses in modern times?

A nation placed as the Magyars have been, ever since they entered Europe, has indeed no alternative between extinction and an almost ferocious attachment to its own ways and manners. A Bavarian, or a member of some minor Slavonic tribe might be willing to merge his national characteristics in those of his neighbours, secure that in doing so he was only exchanging the part for the greater whole that was as truly his. But for the Magyars no compromise has ever been possible. Their

history has been one unrelenting struggle, not only against the fresh invaders from the East who followed in their own footsteps, but against the more prolonged, more insidious, and ultimately even more dangerous pressure of German and Slav. They have never been able to relax, even for a moment, their defence of their nationality; and for that reason, if for no other, it would have been necessary for them to defend, with the utmost tenacity, the social structure which is part of their national armoury.

Yet if their motives are thus easily intelligible, their success, in the face of such constant and such heavy odds, is none the less remarkable—the more astonishing when one considers how very thinly the blood of the old warriors who first crossed the Carpathians can run in the veins of those who call themselves Magyars to-day. The first generations of raiding and slave-snatching in Europe must have altered their racial composition radically, particularly if it is true that the band which first conquered Hungary consisted of male warriors only, their families having been slaughtered by enemies during their absence. Again and again since that date, at the time of the Mongol invasion, during the less savage but far more protracted Turkish occupation, in a host of minor inroads, civil wars, wars of religion, Hungary has been practically depopulated and repopled by alien elements. The Hungarian aristocracy of to-day (not to speak of the middle classes) contains families of German, Jewish, Czech, Slovak, Croat, Italian, Serb, Roumanian, Greek, French, Irish, Turkish origin. The diversity of the racial compounds which make up modern Hungarian Society can be seen at a glance from any representative list of names, and would be far more apparent still had

not successive governments encouraged and even warmly pressed those who were susceptible to such pressure to Magyarize their names where these had a foreign sound.

And yet the Magyar "nation" of to-day—the nationally conscious minorities, of course, apart—is just as genuinely Magyar as ever were Arpád's warriors. The foreign elements have not merely adopted Magyar names, Magyar dress, the Magyar language. They have absorbed the Magyar character and outlook; they are Magyars. Any criticism which fails to recognize this fact misses one of the central truths in the whole situation.

As in the national sphere, so in the social. In most countries, when by the natural processes that occur in every age an old generation dies out, a new one climbs into its place, the new-comers bring with them something, at least, of a new outlook, the product of their earlier environment. In Hungary, so strong is the national tradition, so conservative the national character, that the new recruits to the ruling classes—and every generation has brought many of them—have adopted the ideals and characteristics of their predecessors practically unchanged. Even in their outward forms of living the Magyars have retained much which recalls their old, wandering days in the Eurasian steppes. When the Magyar magnate dons his gala uniform—braided tunic, ermine-trimmed cloak swung gallantly from the shoulders and clasped across the throat with heavy silver brooch, high boots, jaunty fur cap with its egret feather cocking defiance at the world, sabre swung by side—a score of generations of his ancestors would welcome him as one of themselves. And not the magnates alone. The Magyar village of the Alföld, with its symmetrical rows of small deep-eaved, whitewashed

houses, spaced with mathematical accuracy at equal intervals; the broad streets, intersecting at right angles, with little pavement to distinguish them and no wall to separate them from the plain beyond, always seems less of a village than a tented camp pitched for a night or a season which has somehow lengthened out into a century. Often, awakened at dawn, after a night in such a village, by the brazen fanfares blown by the village herd as he swaggers down the street to call the cattle from the byres, and watching the men and beasts recede into the plain in a cloud of dust, and the women come out to sweep clean their floors and courtyards—often I have found it hard to believe that in an hour they will not strike their tents, load their few belongings on to the ample supply of horses which are always to be found wandering about the streets, and follow their menfolk out and away on new adventures.

These are, indeed, mere externals; but like the whole political and social structure of Hungary, they are the manifestations of an outlook on life which the centuries have failed to modify. The Magyars are still what their fathers were before them; a gallant, romantic, and truculent oligarchy, a nation of conquerors, by their virtues and their weaknesses alike a problem to Europe.

II

The great central range of Europe which rises in the Savoyard Alps and the Juras varies its character little until Vienna is reached. Mountain succeeds mountain, in almost unbroken succession. The valleys between them are mere watercourses

for carrying away the melted snows north and south. Through them the traffic routes wind their way painfully and tortuously, and only here and there, where two routes meet, is there a considerable centre of population. The great waterway to Eastern Europe itself, the Danube, is only a modest upland river which approaches the mountains gradually, almost timidly, now skirting their foothills, now shrinking back, but nowhere challenging them. The landscape changes only a little before Vienna is reached. Here, in the Marchfeld, the Danube enters its first considerable plain and then, gathering its strength at last, between Vienna itself and Pozsony it cuts a broad gate, thirty miles wide, through the wall which impedes its flow. To left and right the mountains draw back to let it pass. They and it will meet again, but not for 600 long miles. On its right, along its whole breadth of 200 miles from north to south, the Alpine chain slopes down to its end in a succession of green hills and pleasant valleys. Not until its southern extremity do the Dinaric Alps jut out, running on south-east above the Adriatic; and from their flanks again, the tumbled masses of the Bosnian and Serbian mountains run out eastward for 350 miles, forming a second rampart, almost at right angles to the first. Leftward of the gate, the foothills of the Carpathians begin straight above Pozsony and continue in a vast unbroken arc which runs first north-east, then east, then southward, a span of some 550 miles, turning back abruptly westward at its south-eastern extremity in the Transylvanian Alps which guard the extreme corner of the basin from Walachia. The western end of the Transylvanian Alps would join hands with the Balkans, forming the complete circuit; only between them, through the prodigious gorge of Kazan and the

cruel Iron Gates, the Danube rushes for the second time between the mountains, out towards its lower reaches and the sea.

Thus, except for two very narrow breaches, the mountains run unbroken from Savoy to Moldavia. To the geologist it is not, indeed, one range, but half a dozen, of various ages and structures; but the common economic man is not aware of these differences. The climate is much the same throughout; the slopes bear the same firs and beeches, the green valleys are adapted to much the same cereal and vegetable crops, and the same sheep and cattle can pasture on the hill-tops of Dauphiné and of Moldavia. A man travelling from end to end of them—if he kept among the mountains themselves, and regarded the natural landscape alone and not the works of man—would hardly feel that he had left one country for another.

Only—and here is the essential difference—while in the west the mountains form a solid block from north to south, without even a continuous through route but only a few roads here and there winding over high central passes, in the east they form a ring, which encircles a vast plain; an area of some 100,000 square miles, oval in shape, 400 miles at its greatest breadth from east to west, 300 from north to south. Once, long ago, as geology tells us, all of this area must have formed one enormous lake, fed by a hundred Alpine streams. To-day, although two considerable lakes remain, the rest is dry land, except where the Danube and its tributaries flow across it.

Geographically, this area constitutes the Middle Danube Basin. The Danube is its central artery, into which the whole life-blood of the country is poured. Entering at the far north-western corner, it flows first east, then south, then east again,

traversing from gate to gate some 600 miles before reaching Kazan. No other river of the basin has both its source and its mouth outside the encircling mountain girdle. One—the Alt of Transylvania—rising within the mountains, cuts its way through them by a gate of its own, joining the Danube in Walachia, below the Iron Gates. All the other major rivers—the Rába, the Nyitra, the Save, the Drave, the Unna, the Morava, the Tisza, the three Körös, the Temes, the Maros—flow into the Danube, either directly or via its main tributaries, above Kazan; although some, particularly those on the south and the west, rise far in the mountains and are already considerable streams before they enter the plain. Thus the entire basin forms a singularly homogeneous natural unit, in which the systems of the smaller rivers are only parts of the larger and central system of the Danube.

This does not imply any absolute uniformity in the aspect of the plain, which in fact falls geographically into two very distinct portions, separated by the course of the Danube. Most of the western half of the basin, within the crook of the river, is of a character not strange to Western eyes. The great rivers run down from the Alps through broad and open valleys which lead them gradually to the Danube. The slopes of the valleys are green and delicious, fit for the raising of cereals and the pasturing of cattle. The ridges between them are often of considerable height—in one instance approaching the dimensions of mountains, a continuation of the Alpine spurs—and in early days, at least, were covered with dense forests. The more open parts of Transylvania and the southern slopes of the North Carpathians are somewhat similar in character. The lowlands are an organic continuation of the highlands; the one

melts gradually into the other, and the same race of men, only slightly differentiated by the differing modes of living forced on them by nature, can inhabit both.

On the other hand, the "Alföld"—the central plain which lies between the Danube and the Tisza and on the further bank of the Tisza, as far as the first foot-hills of Transylvania—is of a character unparalleled in Central Europe, except that it is reproduced, on a far smaller scale, in the "Little Alföld" round Fertő, in the north-west corner of the basin. These are plains for leagues and leagues as flat, and as bare, as the proverbial billiard table. The chief highlands which form the watershed between the Danube and the Tisza are some fifty metres in height; but so gradual is their slope that the traveller approaches and crosses them without perceiving their existence. There are many spots whence a man on foot would be hard put to it to perceive a natural eminence higher than his own head. Nothing at all breaks the monotony of the view save a line of false acacias, planted by the hand of man round his homesteads or along the rare watercourses, or one of the great, gaunt, forked poles, fashioned from crude tree-trunks, which mark the wells at which the herds are watered.

Perhaps the strangest feature of these strange expanses is the alternation of the land and water which share them. It is as though their relationships had not yet been rightly adjusted since the cataclysm which let out the rivers and turned the lake into land. In the small hollows and dimples the water still lies, in pools and lagoons and reedy lakes. The Fertő is 20 miles long, yet so shallow that in times of drought a man can wade across it. Indeed, in dry weather half of this water

evaporates or is sucked away by the surrounding soil, which is so thirsty and porous that in its small elevations it is little more than powdery sand-dunes, where the *Fata Morgana* shimmers. But in spring and autumn not only do the lagoons fill up from above, but waters move mysteriously under the earth, so that the level of the Fertő rises with that of the Danube, 15 miles away, and in flood-time the Tisza, which winds a mazy, fantastic course through the heart of the Alföld, used to overflow its banks, change its course, and flood the country for leagues on either hand. In the nineteenth century it was painfully regulated; and now it has been found that when the floods stopped, the land turned sour and alkaline, and refused its fruits.

To the Western European this weird, unsheltered country has about it something unhomely and even terrible. The contrast of the seasons is more violent than that to which he is accustomed; there is nothing to temper the severe heat in summer, nor the terrible blast of the east wind in winter. Only centuries of human effort have made the ordinary processes of agriculture possible; and the frequent droughts and devastating vagaries of the rivers are liable at any moment to destroy the patient work of a generation.

The Alföld has little to tempt the agriculturist. For the roving horseman and cattle-breeder, on the other hand, it offers almost the ideal landscape. Here are no forests in which his beasts can stray, no boundaries to hamper his movements. He can pasture his herds in spring and summer on the rich grass which covers the plains in almost inconceivable abundance after the rains have fallen. When summer drought has parched the soil, he can drive them back to the shallow banks of the great rivers; and when the rains cause the rivers to overflow, he

can take refuge by their new margin, perhaps a dozen miles away.

Important, however, as are the differences between the eastern and the western portions of the plain, the points of resemblance are far greater. The whole basin is unmistakably one country; in the very heart of its western portion the open spaces have some of the characteristic features of the Alföld—features which do not recur in any other country of Europe; and the hills of the south-east and north-east are twin brothers of those of the west. It is only to quite primitive races that a watercourse such as that of the Danube forms an insuperable barrier. Once primitive conditions have been surmounted, the ease of communications in all directions across the basin, coupled with the far greater difficulty of passing its boundaries, creates a strong community between all inhabitants of this basin, and given favourable conditions, assures the formation within it of a national unity.

These factors do not apply only to the plain itself, but also, to a varying extent, to the mountains which surround it. In most of these mountains, transverse valleys are comparatively rare; lateral communications are difficult, whereas communication between mountain and plain is facilitated by the valleys, which point downward and inward. Thus a community of economic interests is imposed by a natural law which the disposition of politics cannot alter; and the same law sets the nation which holds the central lowlands, where all the natural lines of communication converge, at a great advantage compared with the more isolated inhabitants of the periphery.

It does not, of course, make of it their predestined masters. The Alps in the west are the outlyers of a very large system, which is fully able

to carry on a political existence of its own. Nor are the connections, economic and political, of this system confined to its eastern boundary, or even strongest in that direction. Valleys run north into Germany, south into Italy, and the traffic up and down them is easier and more extensive than that which goes east and west. Indeed, when any strong power has held the Alps, it has shown a tendency to encroach upon the plain. When Rome was mistress of both the Alps and the Balkans, her frontier through the plain was the line of the Danube. When a strong nation has camped on the Middle Danube, forces have proved fairly evenly divided, and the frontier has remained remarkably stable along the line of the foot-hills.

The highlands of Bosnia and Serbia, again, are sufficiently open and spacious to support a considerable population. The mountains, especially in the north, are not so high as to make the inhabitants of them dependent on the plain, and if the two systems are in part complementary, they are also in many respects rivals. The transition between them is gradual, except in the stretch right and left of Belgrade, and the products of the northern and more open portion of the highlands differ little from those of the hilly areas on the edge of the plain.

The political relationships between the plain and the highlands south of it have thus been very various. Most often, the political frontier has coincided approximately with the geographical boundary of the plain. There have been conquests and encroachments of the one upon the other, but these have rarely proved of long duration. The advantage has usually been with the plain, since the inhabitants of the tangled Balkan peninsula have not often been able to compose their differences

long enough to allow for the creation of a single power capable of expanding beyond what seem to be their natural frontiers. And this is not mere chance ; for the configuration of the Balkan mainland, like that of Greece, invites the formation of small, independent, and mutually isolated units.

The situation in the east and north is rather different. The arc of the Carpathians forms a single chain, nowhere broad and with a very well-defined central ridge. It is true that at their eastern extremity where they curve round in the form of the arch of a D, they spread out into a more ample expanse. A separate range of hills half closes the western end, like the downward stroke of the D, so that Transylvania " girt as it were with a crown of mountains " as an old writer puts it, forms a sort of national fortress. Thrice within historic times this area has formed an independent State : under the Dacian Empire of Burebista, who long defied the Romans and forced them, in the interests of their hold on the Balkans, to expand beyond the Danube ; after the Romans had withdrawn, under certain Germanic tribes ; and again in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the Turks had overrun Central Hungary. Under modern conditions, however, Transylvania is too small for a separate existence ; even the seventeenth-century principality withered away when its possessions in the plain were cut off. It must lean either on the Middle Danube Basin, or upon Moldavia and Walachia on its outer flanks. Although the wall of the Carpathians is not unbroken, and some places, even on the inner side (e.g. Brasso) communicate easily with the outer line, yet economically the central ridge forms a true dividing line, inside which all the main lines of communication lead inward towards the Tisza and the middle Danube.

This is even more certainly true of the Northern Carpathians. The extreme north-western corner, which is buttressed by the mass of the Tatras, is somewhat more complex, and valleys open, not only southward, but also westward up the Danube valley towards Moravia and Vienna. The long arc which connects the Tatras with Transylvania consists, on the other hand, only of a single narrow chain, a central ridge whence the valleys run down north and south. These valleys have hardly any transverse communications between one another, but are easily accessible from their mouths. These mountains have never enjoyed any independent political life on at all a large scale. The northern slope belongs climatically and economically to Galicia ; the southern, to the Middle Danube Basin ; and the central ridge has formed from time immemorial a true dividing line, a political and economic frontier alike. The two flanks of this ridge have never in recorded history formed part of a single state, except for a few short-lived unions of purely dynastic character.

Thus the connection between the plain and its mountain walls on the north and east has always been particularly close, and their economic interdependence has usually found expression in a close political tie, in which the plain-dwellers have as a rule been the dominant partners.

The central plain is thus a key position, which is of vital importance for all the territory in its immediate neighbourhood ; and far wider than this. It lies full on the great highway which runs from the West of Europe to the East ; to the Black Sea, Constantinople and the Aegean. A strong nation ensconced here occupies a position of great power, and Europe can never be indifferent to the fate of this region which lies against its very heart.

But it is not only a vital centre lying near the heart of Europe ; it is also—and this is what has determined its unique historical role—a meeting-place of Europe and Asia ; a bulwark of the West against the East, a spear-head thrust by the East into the heart of the West. “ Europe ” and “ Asia ” as they are mapped out in the textbooks are only the conceptions of Greek geographers, whose outlook was limited to a tiny corner of the ancient world. To-day, Europe is only the tiny extremity of the vast Eurasian continent, and the true dividing-line between Europe and Asia is the line upon which the civilization which is our common European heritage has been able to maintain itself against the inroads of the outer world. Of all the high-roads into Europe the most dangerous, for fully two thousand years, has been that vast belt of open country, now rich grassland, now meagre desert, but unbroken by any single serious natural obstacle, which begins in Manchuria and stretches clean across Mongolia, Turkestan, above the Caspian and the Black Sea, as far as the Balkans and the Carpathians.

This open belt is the home of those hardy and ferocious nomad horsemen who for long centuries, until modern technique gave the settled communities advantage over them, were the most formidable warriors of the world. No army could stand against them in the field. Safety from them could be found only by means of desperate and unrelenting effort and seldom without the help of some natural advantage. The northern boundary, from Siberia to Galicia, was guarded by its own inclement climate and its impossible barrier of forests ; but to the south, in ancient days, the gaps in the mountains had literally to be walled off, as in China or in the Great Wall across the passes

of the Caucasus, which legend ascribed (although wrongly) to Iskander, Philip's semi-divine son. The keepers of these gates, whether in China or the Hindu-Kush, Persia or the Caspian, played a part in history the importance of which cannot be exaggerated; for if the defences once gave way, the barbarous flood poured over the sheltered lands behind them, and the civilization of centuries might perish in a week.

Herein lies the strange dual role of the Middle Danube Basin. Looked at from the West, the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps form the last outpost of the mountain system behind which the civilizations of Greece and Italy, of Germany and France have grown up. The central plain is simply an open space behind that wall, wherein the guardians of the gate can husband their forces.

But he who looks eastward from Asia sees it differently. For him the Alföld is something entirely familiar, an outlying and isolated fragment indeed, but recognizably a part of the open country of his desire. The mountains lie between; but so narrow are they that in a single day a horseman can cross the Vereczke Pass out of Galicia and reach the head-waters of the Tisza, where he will find a landscape familiar to him and one, with its comparative shelter and its abounding waters, indescribably pleasant. For the unregenerate invader of old this new land offered further advantages of its own: the peoples of the surrounding mountains were at his mercy, and southward and westward the rich booty of a thousand cities lay at his feet.

There was, however, one condition of his existence. Once across the mountains, he must make good his ground or perish. There was no retreat more; history does not record a single nation which recrossed the Carpathians unscathed. Thus

although his position was one of great advantage, it was also one of almost complete isolation.

The history of the Middle Danube Basin is that of a twofold struggle. On the one hand there is the perpetual conflict between the centre and the periphery, a conflict for ever renewed when, as the result of some conflict in the distant Asiatic steppes and the clash of nation against nation, the broken, fleeing fragments of the westernmost race sought refuge across the Carpathians. Then has come the struggle for mastery; for the life of the whole basin is so intimately bound up together that the lowlands must command the highlands, or perish. It is not here as it was on the Pontic shores, where forest-dwellers and steppe-dwellers lived side by side for centuries, not touching one another except for border forays.

Their advantageous central situation and the military strength and ferocity characteristic of all steppe-dwellers has always enabled them to establish an initial domination over an area more or less extensive, according to the strength of the various nations of the periphery. With the lapse of time, however, their power has usually collapsed. In some cases they have worn themselves out in their raids; in others, they have succumbed to a combined attack from their neighbours, or to fresh invaders from the steppes. Their weakness has ever been their inability to combine with the other inhabitants of the basin in a body politic, taking due account of the particular interests of each, and of the common interests of all.

For between mountain and plain there is not only a conflict of interest, but a far stronger community. This is not confined to the close economic connection, imposed by geography, of which we spoke above. It extends also to their relations with the

outside world, and particularly with the East. Each is equally concerned in the defence of their territory against renewed invasion. The inhabitant of the Alföld enters it as the advance guard of the East; but once there, he becomes immediately the rear-guard of the West. Yet to combine this dual role requires not only strength and courage, but also a political genius far above the ordinary. The nation which remains purely Asiatic perishes for lack of fresh life-blood; that which turns its face towards the West risks finding its individuality submerged. Nation after nation has failed in this task. The extraordinary interest of the Magyar people lies in their unique success in creating and maintaining a synthesis between centre and periphery. For a thousand years the boundaries of the political State of Hungary coincided almost exactly with the natural limits of the Middle Danube Basin. Beginning at the Upper Danube gate, above Pozsony, the frontier followed the crest of the Carpathians and the Transylvanian Alps in the north and east, where the watershed forms the true boundary. On the south and west, it followed a line among the foot-hills and along the rivers which separate the hills from the lowlands. Only in the south-western corner the frontier of Croatia curved outward, irregularly, to give access to the sea at Fiume.

These frontiers were not always kept intact, nor was the independence of Hungary always absolute. For more than 150 years much of the central plain was occupied by a foreign invader, and for nearly half her history Hungary owed allegiance to a foreign ruler who resented her independence and constantly assailed it. Yet these obstacles were overcome. The lost provinces were regained, the imperilled independence reasserted. 1914 found Hungary mistress of her historic frontiers and an

equal partner in one of the great Empires of the world.

To-day the frontiers drawn by the Treaty of Trianon have cut the basin into five parts. The whole of the north, now known as Slovakia and Carpatho-Ruthenia, has been united with Bohemia and Moravia to form the Czechoslovak State. The Transylvanian massif—an enlarged Transylvania reaching down into the plains—has joined with Moldavia and Walachia, on the outer flanks of the Carpathians, to form Great Roumania. The south is part of Yugoslavia, which occupies nearly all the western half of the main Balkan peninsula. Austria has advanced her frontier in the west to the edge of the foot-hills, and in part beyond. The Hungary of to-day is only a truncated remnant in the middle of the plain. But these conditions have existed only since 1920. The problems of Hungary even to-day are very largely the problems of the whole basin; the history of Hungary is the history of the old Hungarian State.

III

The process of invasion from the steppes, destruction of the invaders, and renewed invasion had been going on for at least 1,500 years before the arrival of the Magyars in what afterwards became Hungary. Herodotus tells us of Scythian horsemen roaming the plains; and his testimony, which has been queried, is supported by archæology, which shows traces of Scythian life and, probably, rule, not only in the Alföld, but west of the Danube and in the valleys of Transylvania.

After a time the Scythian stock vanished and,

when Rome advanced northward to the Danube, she found the autochthonous Dacian stock predominant in the East, where the rule of its great leader, Burebista, extended far outside the boundaries of Transylvania, while west of the Danube the kindred Illyrian races were intermingled with Celtic tribes. By the second century A.D. Rome had conquered the whole west, up to the line of the Danube, of which she formed the province of Pannonia, as well as the Banat and Southern Transylvania, or Dacia. In the face of Rome's powerful organization the new invaders, the Jazyges or Sarmatians who occupied the Alföld in the middle of the first century A.D., could not threaten the neighbouring lands seriously, although on their own ground they were invincible. The barbarians who forced Rome to abandon Dacia came not from the east, but the north; they were various Germanic tribes, which gradually occupied all the north and east of the basin, while leaving Pannonia intact and the Jazyges holding the Alföld. Then, about the end of the fourth century, came another great invasion from the east; that of the Huns, whose ruler, Attila, after small beginnings, came to dominate the entire basin, with the Pontic steppes beyond. But Attila's own horde was numerically small; and most of his subjects were Germanic. After his death his empire fell asunder. The remnants of the Huns who continued to dwell between the Danube and the Tisza were too few to be important. The rest of the basin was occupied by various, mutually hostile, German tribes.

In the middle of the sixth century appeared the Avars, a fugitive Turkish tribe from Central Asia. They were actually invited across the Carpathians by one of the Germanic kings to help him against

a rival tribe ; but once ensconced in the Alföld, they dealt so successfully with their neighbours that in a few years' time they had made themselves masters of the whole basin, which they ruled for nearly 250 years.

The Avars established themselves in far more favourable circumstances than the Huns. The Roman power was decaying. The Germanic tribes of the Basin were weak and disorganized, and gladly seized the opportunity offered by the collapse of the Empire in Italy to take refuge there from the terrible sons of the steppe. On the other hand, although their frontier extended up the Danube as far as the Enns, they were far too few to occupy so wide a territory in force. Gradually the vacant land was occupied by Slavs who, by the seventh century or thereabouts, had peopled not only almost all the Balkans, but Bohemia, Moravia, all Eastern Austria and Western Hungary, and probably parts of Transylvania also. The Slavs were, however, politically weak and disunited. In the Balkans, where the Eastern Roman Empire had been unable to maintain its rule, the independent principalities of Serbia and Croatia were founded, while a third state, Bulgaria, was mainly Slavonic, although its ruling caste, the Bulgars, were Turki. Further north the rule of the Avars seems to have been absolute. An independent State was organized in Bohemia for a brief period ; but after the death of its founder in 658 we hear no more of it.

At the end of the eighth century the Germans had at last begun to consolidate their state. Charlemagne and his son Pepin attacked and crushed the Avars. The survivors accepted Christianity, and were allowed to settle in an area almost inconceivably small by comparison with their former vast territories. Their empire dissolved, like that

of the Huns. Its western part, as far as the Danube, was occupied by the Franks, who seem to have ruled it in rough and ready fashion through native Slav princes. The east was probably vaguely under the suzerainty of the Bulgars, while in the north, a considerable Slavonic State was presently founded, with its centre in Moravia, and embracing, in all probability, Bohemia, Moravia, and the present Slovakia, as far south as the Danube.

This was the situation when the Magyars crossed the Carpathians, probably in the winter of 895-6.

THE MAGYARS IN HISTORY

I

The crossing of the Carpathians was for the Magyars only the last stage in a long and adventurous journey. Most of the nation had not come from so far afield as the Huns or the Avars ; but they were almost as alien to the life of Central Europe. The main stock of the nation was of Finno-Ugrian origin, and their earliest homes are to be sought on the eastern slopes of the Urals, where their nearest kinsmen, the Voguls and Ostyaks, still lead an obscure and primitive existence. In this primal home the Magyars had been a nation of herdsmen and fishermen, leading an unaggressive but socially undeveloped life. At an early date, however, the nation, or the bulk of it, emigrated (uprooted, probably, in one of the violent racial upheavals common to the steppes) to the open spaces on the north slopes of the Caucasus, whence they moved gradually westward until they reached the eastern coasts of the Black Sea. Their contact with Caucasian influences brought them a knowledge of agriculture and viticulture, and a wider civilization. A more powerful influence was that of the Bulgars, a race of Turki horsemen, who dominated the Magyars, welded them into a nation, and gave them, with a greater practice in the arts of war, a social and political organization.

The Bulgars and Magyars gradually coalesced into one nation, which inherited some of the characteristic traits of each of its component elements. Then, about A.D. 830, the nation thus

Burgundy, ravaging and plundering, and carrying booty, slaves, and women back to their homes.

Probably, however, the descriptions of the monkish chroniclers give a false impression of the Hungarian nation. Both the excessive savagery for which they gained so dreadful a repute, and their great military prowess are perhaps largely to be ascribed to their Khazar allies, the Kavars, who are described in a contemporary work as "taking the first place among them, because they were more powerful in war and more valiant than the other hordes, and took the lead in war". These Kavars, who were true Turks, were in fact mere warriors and plunderers who could never have constructed an enduring State.

The Magyar nation proper was probably less ferocious, certainly less purely destructive, and far more amenable to civilizing influences. They possessed a culture which was outlandish and Asiatic, but not inferior to that of the general run of the peoples of Eastern Europe, and a definite although loose political organization of their own.

Like almost all the steppe peoples, the Magyars constituted a community of free men, or warriors, all of whom were fundamentally free and equal, and had a voice in the national councils. This community was, it would appear, based upon the blood-tie, although outsiders of kindred origin or habits might be admitted on their merits. The son of a free man was, however, himself *ipso facto* free and a full member of the nation.

Against outsiders they presented a united front. By temperament and habit they were a nation of conquerors, and the fact that the steppes which they inhabited were spacious and their attachment to the soil but light, enabled them to indulge their bent. There was no need for them to stay where

their supremacy could not be maintained. If threatened by a stronger nation they could simply shift their quarters. Unless so threatened, they lorded it in virtue of their military prowess, which was great, over the sedentary inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

This theoretical freedom and equality of all members of the Magyar nation, and the privileged position enjoyed by the least of them in relation to any other people, is the fundamental postulate of all Magyar political life. It has been upheld practically unaltered, as will be seen, almost until to-day, and if modern conditions have brought about an apparent change, yet the basic postulate has been rather adapted than abandoned.

The perpetual problem to which such an organization gives rise is that of maintaining the privilege of the freeman in relation to the outer world, without the sacrifice of some part of his liberty in favour of a central authority. The inner political history of the Magyar nation has consisted essentially in the attempt to maintain the privilege without sacrificing the liberty. In the ninth century, under conditions of nomadism, the emphasis was laid on liberty. The warriors were organized in tribes, under chieftains whose position was probably hereditary. None of these chiefs was supreme, although one may have acquired a special position in virtue of seniority or exceptional prowess, but each tribe was practically independent. This absence of a central authority accounts for the frequent national partitions which occurred in the early Magyar history, and was an abiding source of political weakness.

During the period of Khazar suzerainty, however, the chieftain of one tribe, that of Magyar, was, under the patronage of the Khazar Khagan, elevated to the position of supreme ruler. National tradition

makes the election of the house of Arpád to this position the result of a compact between the king and the tribal chiefs. If the latter swore eternal fidelity to the dynasty, yet it was stipulated that if one of the dynasty, as one of the chieftains, broke the compact "he should be for ever accursed". The king was certainly no absolute monarch. The tribal chiefs long remained practically independent princes. Nor was the position of the ordinary free warrior greatly affected, except that a general assembly of the tribes now acted, on occasions, in place of the single tribal assembly. Attendance at this assembly was not only permissible, but obligatory; according to one chronicle, absentees were cut in twain. How far sovereignty actually resided in this assembly is doubtful. According to a later codifier, "the exclusive power of making laws and statutes was vested in the people"; but this principle was enunciated in a more sophisticated age, and by a writer who was anxious to emphasize the rights of the nation against the sovereign. It seems clear, however, that the general assembly of the tribes had much power. It had a voice in decisions of peace and war, and even in the direction to be taken by a proposed campaign. It could take appeal from the decisions of the two chief judicial dignitaries, and even depose them.

But loose as the national organization still was, and democratic as it was, as between the members of the nation, it still allowed for a certain very necessary authority and discipline, and this authority was wielded with exceptional wisdom. It is, perhaps, permissible to see in the work of Arpád, the king who led his nation across the Carpathians, not merely an indication of his personal political sagacity, but a reflection of the mentality of the more stable Finno-Ugrian elements in the

nation, as contrasted with the almost purely predatory and conquering Turkish element. At any rate, Arpád chose for the settlement of his own tribe, not the open *puszta*, but the pleasant, undulating, and sheltered country between Székesfehérvár and Buda, while of the other six tribes of Magyars, three at least also occupied the old Pannonia, the most cultivated portion of the basin. The settlement was, moreover, carried through with great strategic skill, which indicated a feeling for permanency rare in the true nomad. The tribes were disposed around the entrances to the kingdom, to guard against attack, a belt of waste land being left, in each case, beyond their settlements. Perhaps most important of all, the area occupied was relatively small. Hungary was confined to the territory which could be effectively occupied by the Hungarians, being gradually enlarged as occasion arose, when the waste belt was pushed back.

There was thus an element of stability among the invaders, which passed unnoticed by the monkish chroniclers who recorded only the devastations wrought by raiding parties. These raids, after continuing for half a century, ended when the German Empire reassembled its forces. Henry V at Merseburg, and after him Otto I, at the Lechfeld outside Augsburg, inflicted crushing defeats upon the invaders. From 955, the date of the battle of Lechfeld, onward, the Hungarians ceased to be the terror of Europe, and were confined to their own territory.

But what now was to be the future of the nation? Once their extraordinary military power had diminished, worn away, probably, in incessant campaigns, they were left, like all their predecessors, in a singularly isolated and dangerous position; the more dangerous because their neighbours on every side

were gathering their forces. Return to the steppes, now occupied by the Petchenegs, was impossible. In the Balkans the Bulgarian Empire had fallen, but Byzantium had taken on a new lease of life and strength. In the west the Germans were consolidating their forces and had pushed out for their defence the Eastern March, Ostmark, which was to develop into the Austria which we know. Hemmed in between these powerful neighbours, Hungary, without friends or kinsmen, seemed too small to stand alone. If she attempted to do so, one or the other of them would conquer her in the end. Yet if she sought the protection of any of them, she ran an equal risk of losing her national individuality by absorption. Already both Germany and Byzantium were encroaching upon her. Their missionaries had gained many converts, among them several of the highest rank. Political influence had accompanied religious, and it even seemed possible that the nation might lose its unity, part coming under the Eastern sphere of influence, part under that of the West.

II

From these dangers Hungary was saved by Stephen, the second great statesman which the house of Árpád had produced. Stephen, who was canonized after his death by the Roman Church, reigned from 997 to 1038. He is one of the great figures of Hungarian, and even of European history. He at once determined Hungary's international position, as an independent State within the sphere of Western culture, and adapted her internal institutions to the new, settled mode of life. It was still open to Stephen on his accession to choose between

the two great Churches or even to favour paganism. He was fortunate in that his decision in favour of the West, which must have accorded better with his personal inclinations and family traditions, was also politically the sounder ; for the German Empire was less dangerous at the moment to Hungarian independence than the Byzantine. In another respect he was amazingly fortunate. At this era the power of the Empire over the Papacy was almost absolute ; but just at the time of Stephen's accession, and for a few years only, the Papal See was occupied by a man of extraordinary personality, in the shape of Sylvester II, who possessed a great personal ascendancy over the young Emperor, Otto III. Otto dreamed of a new and more holy Empire, wherein the lay and the ecclesiastical powers should work together with greater mutual respect. He had already sanctioned the ecclesiastical independence of Poland, and when Stephen sent his emissaries to Rome he did not resist when Sylvester claimed an authority extending even beyond purely ecclesiastical affairs. Not only did the Pope grant Stephen the title of Apostle, on the ground that he had converted so many souls to the Church, with powers to found episcopal sees equivalent to those of a legate *a latere* ; he personally conferred on him the title of king, and sent him a royal crown. Thus Hungary was not only made ecclesiastically independent of the German bishoprics, but the temporal authority of her ruler was also independent of the Emperor's sanction, since the kingdom of Hungary was held to " belong in an especial way to the Holy Roman Church ".

The independence of the Hungarian Crown was a permanent gain of inestimable value. Hungary would probably have been forced else to accept a position of subordination to one of the two great

Empires ; as it was, she maintained an independent position almost unique in the Western world of that day. For Stephen's choice, in an age when the Church was almost the sole cultural force, made Hungary definitely a part of Western civilization. Henceforward her eastern frontiers were also the line which divided the spiritual life of the East from the West.

It must be added that the national conversion was permanent. Stephen himself, who was undoubtedly a devout Christian, and whose reign was a long one, put down both Orthodoxy and paganism in his kingdom by forceful measures, consolidating his victory by the foundation of bishoprics and monasteries, and by the organization of an ecclesiastical hierarchy in a position of exceptional influence. Paganism was not, indeed, stamped out. It was largely identified with the national movement, which was opposed to Western innovations and civilization, and was particularly strong east of the Danube. It continued to flicker up from time to time during succeeding centuries, particularly when the nomad element in Hungary was reinforced by fresh immigration from the steppes, and at one time, after a particularly large influx, was within a hair's breadth of tipping the scale once more ; but Catholicism just succeeded in maintaining its power, which it has never since lost.

No less important was Stephen's internal political consolidation. He had behind him his own tribe of Magyar, and probably also much of the rest of the nation—the more so as the balance of population had by now largely shifted in favour of the more stable elements, which had adapted themselves better to the new conditions of life, had probably intermingled to some extent with the pre-Magyar population, and had certainly absorbed elements of its

civilization ; while he was also helped, to an important extent, by the many German knights who had accompanied his wife from Bavaria. Stephen's great innovation, besides the establishment of private ownership of land, was the abolition of the old tribal organization. The very names of the tribes soon disappeared and, in their stead, Stephen set up a centralized, bureaucratic national State, modelled on that of Charlemagne. The king himself was the supreme monarch. He was assisted by the Palatine, his right-hand man, who was in charge of the administration and gave judgment in the King's absence, and by a number of other court officials. The rest of the country, except that inhabited by the pagan tribes and the foreign "guests", was divided into "Counties" (*comitatus*), each administered by a Count (*Comes*, *Főispán*) with certain assistants. These were in all cases the king's servants, nor was their tenure necessarily for life. They administered the affairs of the un-free population, and led the free population into battle.

The position of the ordinary member of the Magyar nation, the ordinary free man or soldier, remained substantially unchanged. The clergy were assigned an especial privileged position in Stephen's State ; but after them he groups together "princes, counts, and soldiers" in a single category, and with the one exception that the "soldiers" (under which name all free members of the nation are to be understood) had to follow certain leaders in war, the law distinguished only between the rich and the poor of the nation for the purpose of graduating penalties according to ability to pay. All members of the conquering race remained in theory free and equal. Any might be appointed to royal office, none might be degraded to slavery, except for certain criminal offences. Among the many important privileges

enjoyed by them was that of exemption from all taxation; a privilege tenaciously defended and retained until the nineteenth century. They had the right of direct appeal to the Crown for justice (although minor offences were tried locally), and were able to attend the general meetings of the nation, of which Stephen is known to have held several. If, however, this assembly ever possessed any legislative and executive sovereignty, it was in abeyance under Stephen. Stephen, whose position was, of course, greatly strengthened by the peculiar reverence in which his dynasty was held, comes in his laws very near proclaiming himself ruler "by grace of God", and nowhere suggests the existence of any constitutional limits to his authority. He refers now and again to a Royal Council, composed of such members (usually persons of age and gravity) whose advice the monarch might find valuable, but he does not suggest that it must be accepted.

What distinguished Stephen's institutions from those of a modern bureaucratic state, and at the same time enabled even the poorest Magyar to retain his freedom and his rank, was the existence of a considerable non-Magyar population. This fell into several categories, whose legal status and *de facto* positions differed widely. Firstly, there were the slaves, acquired in war or foray, whose numbers must have been considerable. Slavery was recognized as an institution even by Stephen, although he manumitted most of his own slaves; it did not finally die out until the end of the thirteenth century. The position of the slave was entirely that of a chattel. His master could kill him if he pleased—although if he killed the slave of another, the damage had to be replaced. There was practically only one thing that a master might not do to a slave; he might not take a female slave to wife in lawful wedlock. If he did

so, he incurred the same penalty as was invoked by treason or theft, and he became himself a slave—an interesting example of the preoccupation of the primitive conquering nation for the purity of the race.

Besides the slaves, there were other non-Magyars of at least two classes, one of which was composed of those peoples whom the Magyars found on their entry into Hungary. The question of who these peoples were is still hotly disputed, since the territorial claims of the various nations at the Peace Conference were based by their advocates in part on rival theses of historic priority. It is certain that no powerful State existed in the Middle Danube Basin when the Magyars arrived; but the country was not, of course, uninhabited. The inhabitants of "Great Moravia" were probably the ancestors of the present Czechs and Slovaks, at that time indiffereniable. They occupied the extreme north-western corner of the basin, but it is quite uncertain how far their limits extended eastward. The course of the Ipoly was probably their extreme boundary, and the higher mountains of the Carpathians can have been only very sparsely inhabited. South of the Danube, in the territory belonging to the German Empire, there may have been a few German monks and peasants, but the majority of the population was Slavonic: Czechs in the north, Slovenes throughout the southern, larger portion. The population was in any case sparse; most of the land was covered by forest and marsh. In the two Alfölds there must have been some remnants of the Avars, but most of the population of the open country would seem to be Bulgar—remnants of a horde of Bulgars who accompanied the Avars, or stragglers from Balkan Bulgaria. Princes with Bulgar names ruled over parts of Transylvania. There were also

a few isolated relics of earlier racial migrations, such as Gepids, and other Avars, in the south.

The chief controversy has raged round the position of the Vlachs, or Roumanians, in Transylvania. The earliest known inhabitants of Transylvania were the Dacians, a race akin to the Thracians of the Balkans. The country was conquered by Trajan and colonized, many Roman citizens from all parts of the Empire being settled in it; and as inscriptions show, an active Roman life developed in the chief centres. In the late third century it was subjected to heavy and constant attacks from Germanic tribes, and Rome finally withdrew her legions and transplanted the "Roman citizens" to the right bank of the Danube. From this moment all records concerning the country cease. The Hungarian contention is that the entire Latin-speaking population was withdrawn, the country remaining empty until it was overrun by various Germanic and other tribes who in their turn abandoned it. The ancestors of the present Roumanians entered it only gradually, in small numbers at first, and not at all before the twelfth century. The Roumanians believe that when the garrisons and urban inhabitants were withdrawn, a Latinized rural population, direct ancestors of the present Roumanians, remained and survived in unbroken historic continuity until the arrival of the Magyars, and afterwards. Neither side can produce any indisputable proof of its case, and each finds it much easier to demolish the arguments of its adversary than to support its own.

Some of these peoples were enslaved; some, men of rank or courage, were admitted from the first into the community of the Magyar nation. The greater number occupied an intermediate position. They lived as peasants or artisans upon the king's land, or on the land assigned by the king to the Church

and, at a rather later period, to various of his magnates and followers. They were liable to various duties and payments; amongst other things they bore the whole burden of taxation of the State, as well as the duty of victualling the royal fortress and meeting the expenses of the king when he made his periodical rounds. How far they were liable to military service is uncertain. They were not, however, without rights. Their dues were limited, and their property secure. At least where they existed in any considerable numbers, they normally regulated their own internal affairs by their own common law. Graver offences came before the Court, if they were on royal land, or before the Church authorities.

The freedmen, previous slaves who received their liberty, must also be reckoned among this class, which again formed a considerable element in the population. A thirteenth-century writer says that Hungary was "almost filled with them".

Finally, there were the "*hospites*" or privileged immigrants, a category which throughout Hungarian history has played a part of the greatest importance and interest. They consisted of those elements who joined the Magyars of their free will, or were invited on special terms which precluded their being treated as slaves or serfs.

This class, again, was numerous. The Kavars probably belonged to it, even before the Magyars had crossed the Carpathians. Afterwards there was a small but steady infiltration from the steppes, including Petchenegs and a number of Mahomedan Bulgars from the Volga. The immigration of foreign elements was particularly encouraged by Géza and his son, Stephen, under whose reign a large number of German knights from Bavaria and elsewhere entered Hungary. In his political testament to his

son, Stephen has an interesting passage on the subject. "Guests and immigrants," he writes, "are so useful that they may worthily be assigned the sixth place in the king's hierarchy. For thence did the Roman Empire first wax great, and their kings were mighty and glorious because many noble and wise men flocked hither from various parts. Indeed, Rome would have been a handmaid to this day, had not the children of Aeneas made her free. For even as guests come from various parts and provinces, so they bring with them diverse tongues and customs, and diverse documents and arms, all of which adorn and make splendid the royal courts, and awe the pride of the foreigner, for a kingdom of one tongue and one habit is feeble and fragile. Therefore, my son, I bid thee nurture them with a good will and maintain them honourably, that they may live with thee more gladly than they dwell elsewhere. For if thou dost seek to destroy what I have built up, or to scatter what I have gathered together, without doubt thy kingdom will suffer greatly. Increase thy kingdom daily lest that happen, that the crown may be honoured of all men."

Stephen's appreciation of the value of these foreigners may have been due in part to the use which he was able to make of them against the rebellious magnates of his own nation. Even more, however, the "guests" were invited to increase the population and strength of the country by filling up its waste places, and to advance its material wealth and culture. Immigrants were very largely used for frontier defence, it being an old system, practised by almost all Turki nations as well as by Rome herself, to colonize the frontiers with warlike aliens. This duty the Magyars entrusted almost exclusively to men of kindred stock to their

own; Petchenegs and Jazyges (another immigrant steppe-people), who were settled in large numbers on the frontier against Austria and Bohemia, and Székely, in Transylvania.¹ The only other race to which so responsible a duty was ever delegated were the Germans, who were settled in the twelfth century in Transylvania, and in Szepes, in the Northern Carpathians. The Germans were, however, more widely used as miners, artisans, and town-dwellers. We hear also of Jewish merchants, of "Ishmaelites", or Mahomedan Bulgars, who had charge of the royal mint, and of Slavs, who were not infrequently invited to settle in waste land or forest and bring it under cultivation. The Vlachs, being nomadic herdsmen, were not welcome guests, and are not mentioned in the earliest documents.

The individual noble who entered Hungary as a "guest" was generally admitted to the status and privileges of the Hungarian nation, into whose ranks he or his sons quickly merged. The same right was often granted to the upper classes among the conquered races, and sometimes to whole communities at a time. Usually, however, the guests enjoyed a status different from that of the Magyars proper, and regulated by a special "privilege" or "liberty", the terms of which varied greatly according to the value set upon the services of the persons concerned. One or two very important communities, such as the "Saxons" of Transylvania, enjoyed almost complete self-government, and were directly subject to the king. Others were under the Palatine, or some other high Count or ecclesiastical official. A small group of peasant

¹ The origin of the Székely is still disputed. Their own tradition makes them descendants of the Huns. They were almost certainly a Turco-Tatar people, but whether they were Avars, Kavars, or a branch of the Magyars cannot be said with certainty. To-day they are Magyar in language and national sentiment.

cultivators might be under the Count or some local magnate, and its "privilege" might amount to no more than a certain limitation of *corvées* or military service.

Nearly always, however, such communities applied to themselves their own common law, except for serious offences, and there was never any attempt, or desire, to assimilate the stranger. "What Greek," wrote Stephen, "would rule Latins by Greek laws, or what Latin would rule Greeks by Latin laws?" The modern idea of the homogeneous, uni-national State was entirely foreign to medieval thought; most foreign of all, perhaps, to a State with such strong Oriental traditions as Hungary.

These, then, were the foundations upon which the Hungarian State in Europe was laid. They have been described in some detail because they remained, in all essentials, the basis of Hungarian society. The Magyar is politically conservative, and does not lightly change his institutions; and these were in many respects exceptionally well adapted, both to his needs and to his national traditions.

Hungary was not then, and never has been, a State inhabited solely by Magyars. The pre-Magyar races, the slaves, and the "guests" must between them have made up a very considerable proportion of the population, nor was any attempt made to disguise this fact. On the other hand, Hungary was from the first pre-eminently the national State of the Magyar people. They entered the Danube basin as a nation of free men, and as such they conquered and took it. The rights and responsibilities of the State were theirs, and they did not divest themselves of those rights by the welcome which they accorded to many foreign immigrants. Some of the "guests" enjoyed very wide privileges, and a material position superior to that of many Magyars; but they enjoyed it

within the Magyars' State. As for the conquered peoples, they submitted to the law of conquest which was in those days unquestioned.

It was a national State in a sense in which hardly any other European State was national, because it was based on the free and equal community of the Magyar nation. In the matter of rights, no member of the nation was inferior to any other, except only the king. The bureaucratic and centralized system established by Stephen was an almost necessary consequence of this principle. The royal dynasty itself owed its position to election, and stood in a relation to the nation different to that of some Western ruler by grace of God and marriage alliance. The king's exact relationship to the nation might be a subject of dispute ; but at all events, he was pre-eminently a national sovereign.

III

The next centuries were a period of consolidation and development, accompanied by a gradual expansion up to the limits of Hungary's natural frontiers. In the west the organized German Empire stopped the advance early—the frontier line which remained definitive up to 1918 was laid down as early as 1031—and in the south Hungary's neighbour was, at certain times, the Byzantine Empire. But in the north, east, and south-west there were only petty princes, or chieftains, against whom she could expand at her leisure. Such new acquisitions were at first often bestowed on a son or brother of the ruling sovereign ; but this habit, which was a constant source of weakness and civil strife, was overcome, and the process of growth proceeded without detriment to the unity of the

kingdom. The frontier zone was normally left barren, its inner edge being guarded usually by some community of non-Magyars, standing outside the county organization. When the country felt strong enough to expand, the waste zone was brought under cultivation and a new one created beyond it. A large acquisition was at first ruled separately under a high official, who usually bore the old Avar title of "ban"; but as conditions grew more settled, the "banat" would be incorporated and organized in the usual counties.

In this way the number of Counties increased from 45 in Stephen's day to 72 in the thirteenth century. Stephen himself had conquered the south-eastern corner of the plain between the Danube, Maros, and Tisza, and the valley of the Vág around Trencsen, and had begun the colonization of Transylvania. Later rulers pushed out the northern and north-western frontiers to the 1918 line, the forest clearings being gradually colonized with Slovaks, Germans, and Magyars. By the end of the thirteenth century, Northern Hungary had become an integral part of the kingdom. The conquest of Transylvania was completed a little earlier, but it always remained rather apart from Hungary proper. Magyar colonists pressed up its western valleys, but its mountainous interior was left to non-Magyar races. After the Teutonic Knights had held part of it for a brief period, proved intractable, and been forced to leave, this country was practically divided between the "Saxons" and the Székely, each with their separate national organization; Transylvania as a whole being under a royal officer, the "voivode", who held much the same position as the Palatine in the interior of Hungary.

In the south-west of the basin, again, the organization was different from that of Hungary proper.

The triangle between the Danube and the lower course of the Save and Drave had been acquired by the Magyars soon after they crossed the Carpathians. The country west of this was conquered in the eleventh century, and formed into a Slavonian Banat, which enjoyed considerable local self-government. In 1091 Ladislaus annexed Croatia, which then reached southward from the Unna to Montenegro.¹ King Coloman reconquered it, after it had revolted, in 1105, with Dalmatia. These three districts of Slavonia, Croatia, and Dalmatia were united and at first treated as the appanage of the younger sons of the Hungarian king. Afterwards they were placed under a Ban. They enjoyed very wide self-government—Croatia, for example, retained her old laws, and ownership of real property within her limits was forbidden to Magyars. The Croat nobles in general enjoyed the same rights as those possessed by the Magyar nobles; Dalmatia's privileges were rather less far-reaching.

The boundaries of these new acquisitions varied greatly throughout the centuries; Dalmatia, in particular, was only under effective Hungarian control for a comparatively short period; but speaking generally, Hungary maintained her hold over this south-western corner of the Middle Danube Basin, and over the outlet to the sea beyond it. The exact relationship between the territories in question and Hungary proper was a matter of dispute up to 1918. The Croats maintained that they had joined Hungary of their free will, and should be considered as an allied State. The Magyars,

¹ It was only much later, after the movements of population occasioned by the Turkish advance, that the name of Croatia came to be applied to the more northerly region which is now so named, while that of Slavonia came to describe the country south-east of it, between the lower Save and Drave. Before acquiring the name of Slavonia, this was for a time called Slovakia.

while admitting Croatia's right to self-government, yet held her to be a conquered land, and an integral part of Hungary; coronation in Hungary with the Holy Crown being valid for Croatia also.. The disputed point in law was whether the formula "*partes adnexæ*" or "*partes subjectæ*" should be used for Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia.

Outside these well-defined limits little was undertaken, just as within them Hungary's hold was seldom shaken (although for a brief period she lost Syrmia to the Byzantine Empire, and was never secure in her possession of Dalmatia). For a certain period she exercised a more or less effective suzerainty over Moldavia and Walachia; but even the most firmly established of these political units, the Banat of Severin, was lost in the fourteenth century. A series of banats established in the thirteenth century in the north of the present Serbia and Bosnia, and a wider control of Bosnia and Bulgaria, were maintained, in some instances, for several centuries, but the Magyar colonization hardly extended across the Drave,¹ and the Slavonic districts proved a source of weakness to Hungary herself, owing to the permanent disaffection of the inhabitants. Although one or two of her kings conducted campaigns in Galicia and Lodomeria, and established for a short time a trans-Carpathian empire, these adventures were so unpopular that the nobles at one time threatened, unless they were abandoned, "to go home and elect another king."

In general, the kings of the dynasty of Arpád cared little to meddle in European affairs. They remained national sovereigns busied chiefly with

¹ The only important exception is the flat country in the north-west of Bosnia, which from about 1250-1450 was organized in three counties, and seems to have had a Magyar population. In Dalmatia, the rest of Bosnia, and Serbia, there were Magyar landowners and Magyar colonies, but most of the population was Slavonic.

the internal affairs of Hungary. Hungary thus remained for centuries almost untouched by the dynastic struggles between the reigning houses of Europe which proved so disastrous to many States of the day. Whether or no a compact had indeed been made upon the steppes between Árpád and his nation, the claim of the male descendants of his house to succeed to the throne was not questioned so long as the stock survived.

There was one weakness in the understanding. According to Turki custom, the throne was the appurtenance of the family, and not of one particular member of it. Wars of succession between rival claimants were not infrequent, and the weaker pretender was easily tempted to seek foreign aid. Stephen's own immediate successor jeopardized Hungary's independence by doing homage to the Emperor in return for help in a struggle of this type. Any hint of foreign control, however, immediately aroused a violent national resistance. The Emperor was forced to abandon his claim, and his successors were too deeply engaged in their struggle with the Papacy to reassert it effectively. The Byzantine Emperors, except for a short period in the twelfth century, were equally unable to pursue an active Hungarian policy; and for some centuries, neither Bohemia, Poland, nor the nations of the East were able seriously to threaten her independence.

Thus Hungary was left alone to develop her national institutions in her own way. There were drawbacks to this and advantages. Standing outside the main stream of European life, Hungary had few contacts with her neighbours, either political, economic or cultural. But Hungarian life long remained patriarchal and in many respects primitive. It was long before money came into general use or the chief source of wealth ceased to reside in the

products of pasture, field, and forest. The common man lived in a tent or a hut of reeds, and the king himself moved round his realm from citadel to citadel, collecting tribute and dispensing justice.

Probably most of the nation did not regret this isolation; for there resides in the breast of most Magyars a deep conviction that the outer world can offer him nothing to equal the gifts of his own home. An ancient Hungarian saying runs: "*Extra Hungariam non est vita, et si est vita, non est ita*—outside Hungary there is no life, or if there is a life, it is not like ours." And in truth, there is, and there probably always was, in Hungary a peculiar beauty and abundance which removed the temptation to wander. The stranger, measuring its institutions against those of the West, will find much that seems to him backward or uncouth; but to its natives it has an air which is to them the very air of life.

In this comparative immunity from foreign influence, the social and political institutions of Hungary developed along their traditional lines and took on forms which even the conditions of to-day have modified rather than superseded. It may thus be permissible to describe them in outline here, even though some of the developments recorded did not take place until the fifteenth or even the sixteenth centuries.

The active political forces within the nation still remained three: the king, the great magnates, and the body of freemen. Stephen had, indeed, almost eliminated the influence of the magnates, while greatly reinforcing that of the king. He was in a particularly strong position, because all land except that assigned to and occupied by the tribes was regarded as royal property, and the freemen dwelling on it were the "king's servants"—*servientes regis*—

directly dependent, economically and politically, upon him and his officials. After his death, however, the power of the Crown declined, gradually but steadily. * Some other monarchs after him ruled with an equally high hand, but they were far more dependent on foreign help. Stephen himself had initiated the custom of bestowing estates upon his friends and adherents; and this practice was continued on a far more lavish scale by his weaker successors. In this way a class of territorial magnates, whose position corresponded in practice, if not in theory, to that of the old tribal chiefs, gradually grew up.

The process was slow, but steady. By the end of the thirteenth century the royal domains were so diminished that a weak king, not supported by any outside force, might easily find himself less of a power in the land than one of his own magnates. In fact, there were periods when the kingdom was practically ruled by a clique of a few oligarchs. This process was, of course, common enough in the Europe of the day. Within the Empire, in particular, it was carried to such lengths that the original unit disintegrated into a vast number of smaller States which were entirely, or practically entirely, independent. Hungary, however, was never a part of the Holy Roman Empire, and feudal institutions never took root there. It was not until the native dynasty was replaced by foreign rulers that the richest of the oligarchs became in theory anything more than a very large landed proprietor, equal, except in his wealth, to any other free member, of the nation. Afterwards certain modifications were introduced, and the magnates gradually developed into a separate Estate. But even after these changes, and even although the power of the oligarchs was, at certain periods in the Hungarian history, greater

than that of the king himself, they never in theory approached the position which the feudal system gave to the great feudal potentates of the Empire ; this being due in part to the relatively small area of Hungary, and the ease with which the central authority could make itself everywhere felt ; but in large part also to the successful defence of their liberties put up by the smaller free men.

The position of the freemen was naturally affected by the growth of the oligarchy. Those whose ancestors had failed to secure a share of the land at the first distribution, and even the smaller land-owners, were forced into dependence on the magnates and became little better than serfs, or even lost their liberty altogether. As a class, however, they were saved by the memory of their early tradition, by the intense fervour with which they defended their own liberties, and by the frequent coincidence of their interests with those of the king. After Andrew II had weakened the decrepit royal power still further by a lavish grant of lands to the great magnates, a great revolt of the *servientes regis* took place, and the king was forced to issue the famous charter of 1222 known as the "Golden Bull". This comprehensive document dealt with the rights of nearly all classes of society ; but its most important effect was to enshrine the liberties of the *servientes*. They were guaranteed the right of appearing at the court to be held annually by the king or by his Palatine, in Székesfehérvár ; they might not be arrested or punished at the instance of a magnate, without due process of trial ; their exemption from taxation of any kind was confirmed ; they had the right to refuse military service abroad, and the legal processes to which they were subject were exactly defined. Further, it was provided that the titles and estates of the Lords-Lieutenant should not be

hereditary, they might take only their due from the county revenues, and those who abused their office should be degraded.

The "Golden Bull" was confirmed and amplified in 1231, and was subsequently ratified in the Coronation oaths of a long series of kings. Its importance lies less, perhaps, in its immediate effect than in its establishment of certain permanent principles. It was the charter of liberties of the descendants of the original Magyar conquerors; the guarantee that they should never be degraded into the position into which the serf in Western Europe was falling. Nor, despite the subsequent development of institutions akin to those of feudalism, were they ever so degraded. They always retained such a status that a medieval or Renaissance king, for whom the serf was practically an animal, could without shame seek their support and alliance; they remained in theory what their ancestors had been in the days of Arpád—all free and all equal.

The "Golden Bull" was confirmed again and again. In 1351 Louis the Great declared that:—

"At the request of the nobles we permit that all true noblemen within the frontiers of our realm, including the Duchy of Slavonia, shall enjoy one and the same liberty."

Finally, the famous codification of Hungarian law completed by Verböczy in 1514 laid down that:—

"All prelates, ecclesiastical dignitaries, barons and other magnates, noblemen and gentry of this realm of Hungary enjoy one and the same prerogative of liberty of exemption and immunity with respect to their nobility and their worldly goods. Neither has any lord more liberty, nor any nobleman less. Therefore all laws and customs, and legal procedure, are equal for them all, only the were-gild is unequal.

But this depends, not upon freedom, but on office and dignity."

Four cardinal liberties enjoyed by all noblemen were exemption from arrest before trial and judgment (except in the case of murder, arson, theft, brigandage, or rape, when the offender was caught *flagrante delicto*); direct subordination to the king, without any intermediary; exemption from all taxation, direct or indirect, and from the obligation of military service outside the kingdom; and the right of resistance to the king if he violated the liberties of the nobles.

Gradually these small nobles or gentry managed to acquire a considerable share of the political power. Under the "Golden Bull", as has been mentioned, the office of Lord-Lieutenant ceased to be hereditary; and as the establishment of an effective Civil Service was impossible in the circumstances of the day, the power in the counties passed into the hands of the local nobility—the *universitates nobilium* as they came to be called. The system developed rapidly in the thirteenth and subsequent centuries. While the Lord-Lieutenant, or Főispán, remained a royal official, his Deputy and the remaining officials of the local administration—the judges, assessors, and notaries—were elected by the "congregations" of the county nobles. Calls to arms were addressed to the "congregations", not to the Lord-Lieutenant. Laws and decrees were promulgated at the County Assembly and executed by the County officials; the County enacted regulations and exercised local jurisdiction and, after 1435, collected the royal taxes and saw to the provisioning of the royal troops. Nor was its influence only local; in 1267 it was enacted that two or three nobles from every County should attend the annual Court at Székesfőhérvár "in order that in their

presence satisfaction may be given to all complainants for all injuries and wrongs inflicted, no matter by whom ”.

The existence of this class, all members of which enjoyed the same rights and liberties, throughout Hungary, and to all of whom the disintegration of Hungary would have meant the loss of their position, was the best safeguard for the continued political unity of the country. It must be remembered that, although often exceedingly impoverished (for while estates were entailed in each family, they were continually subdivided among its members), the nobles were extremely numerous. While freedom and liberty derived from the king alone, yet a noble could not lose his freedom except for certain specified criminal offences. Moreover, “nobility” was a rank, and not a title; all sons of a nobleman were themselves noble, and all, incidentally, had a claim to an equal share in their father’s estate. Furthermore, it was not a closed caste, but constantly received fresh recruits. Not only individuals, but whole villages were not infrequently ennobled for prowess in war, or some other cause. Many immigrants, such as the Cumans in the thirteenth century, were admitted as a body as nobles, as were many of the Slavs and Roumanians along the northern and eastern frontiers.

Numerous as the nobles were, they were far outnumbered by the un-free population—described by the sixteenth-century codifier Verböczy as the *misera contribuens plebs*—the basis upon which the structure of Hungary, as of every other medieval State, rested. To the liberated slaves of the early Magyars must be added those freemen who had been degraded for crime, those who had lost their liberty through misfortune or the tyranny of some powerful neighbour, prisoners of war, Slovak and

Walach immigrants of the humbler sort, making in all probably at least nine-tenths of the total population.¹

The position of this class long remained somewhat indefinite. It seems probable that they were burdened with various servitudes ; but the population being still sparse and its habits semi-nomadic, these were difficult to enforce, and as there was no restriction on the right of migration, it was always possible to leave a hard master for a more indulgent one. The status of the peasants was not regulated in any systematic fashion until 1357, when Louis the Great, at the same time as he regulated the status of the nobles, also unified the dues to be paid by the peasants on a basis which for that time, and assuming that the nobles did their duty in the defence of the kingdom, was not very onerous. Nor did the peasant even now become entirely subject to his master's will. Certain masters received the right of jurisdiction over their peasants even for capital offences ; but the right of appeal to the king's magistrates remained even in these cases, while many peasants were subject only to the royal jurisdiction.

On the other hand, as the power gradually passed into the hands of the County nobility, this meant in practice that the nobles had almost complete control over the property and even the lives of the peasants, and each step taken by the nobles to consolidate their position was taken in part at the expense of the more unfortunate class which bore the whole taxation of Hungary and produced most of its wealth. During the later Middle Ages their

¹ A large landed estate seems to have been reckoned as one containing more than some thirty-two to thirty-three peasant families ; but many of the great proprietors owned estates on which thousands of peasants lived. On the other hand, there were plenty of impoverished nobles who owned no serfs at all.

position deteriorated fairly steadily. King Matthias, who ruled with a heavy hand and was able, in the stress of the Turkish danger, to impose upon the nobles sacrifices to which they would never have consented in ordinary times, did something to level up the burdens and to administer even-handed justice. But when he died in 1490, the cry (which long remained proverbial) went up that "King Matthias is dead, justice is gone", and in the disorganized, grabbing age which followed, the oppressions grew worse than ever. In 1514 a frightful jacquerie broke out. It was put down with more than inhuman savagery, and the Diet thereafter, perpetrating the worst social injustice in Hungarian history at the moment when she could least well afford it, condemned the participants to "true and perpetual serfdom".

Thus at the end of six centuries of natural development Hungary still retained a social system which was essentially that which the nomad Magyar warriors had brought with them from the steppes. There had been certain adaptations to altered economic conditions, certain concessions to imported ideas, particularly when foreign dynasties succeeded to the old native house. Yet the system remained recognizably the same, and not even greatly changed. It was one which, like the later English squirearchy which it so closely resembled, could as easily and as truly be praised for its liberty or decried for its tyranny. As compared with a despotism, or even with the more usual feudalism of the day, the large size of the noble class, with the perfect theoretical equality which reigned among them, and the importance of the limitations which this class was able to impose upon the royal power, resulted in an exceptionally broad basis of political liberty. On the other hand, unless all are free, the more numerous

the masters, the less enviable the servants ; and the unfree population would have been happier had the members of the free nation been less numerous.

In one other important aspect the main nature of the Magyar State remained unaltered : in its national character, which, again, derived from the existence of the large noble class. The nationalism of the Middle Ages was not the same as the nationalism of to-day. The modern doctrine of self-determination, so often confused with the kindred but distinct doctrine of democracy, was yet to be born. The Magyars claimed their territories by right of conquest, not because they were inhabited by Magyars ; and there was no reason for them to insist that every member of their political nation should be Magyar by birth or speech. In fact, from St. Stephen's day onward, they admitted large numbers of non-Magyars to the membership of their nation and enjoyment of its privileges. Yet the core of the nation was Magyar. The pride of the great families was to trace descent from the original invaders, and most of the new politically privileged elements (except the townspeople and the larger German colonies living a separate life under extensive "liberties") soon became Magyarized. This process was facilitated by the fact that the Magyars admitted to their ranks with particular readiness Turki peoples, such as the Cumans, Jazyges, and Petchenegs, who were refugees with no national State of their own in the neighbourhood, and Magyarized very easily. It seems certain that the privileged class which constituted the Hungarian "nation" was, up to the sixteenth century, overwhelmingly Magyar, and Hungarian policy remained to a peculiar degree national.

On the other hand, the political structure gradually lost its appearance of a domination of Magyars over

other races, through the Magyarization also of a large proportion of the non-privileged classes. This was not due to any conscious attempt to assimilate the non-Magyars of Hungary; the natural policy of the conquering races of earlier days was always to keep the dividing line between conquerors and conquered as sharp as possible. But with the centuries a fairly large number of true Magyars sank into serfdom and the strong influence of natural assimilation operated upon an even larger number of non-Magyars.

This process was, of course, far from complete. Verböczy mentions that the peasantry of his day comprised, besides Magyars, "Saxons, Germans, Bohemians and Slavs who profess Christianity, Walachs, Ruthenes, Serbs and Bulgars who follow the end of the Greeks, Philistines (Jazyges) and Cumans," and besides Slavonia and Croatia, the newly conquered or newly colonized districts of the periphery, especially in the north and north-east, must still have been largely non-Magyar, and there were non-Magyar islands even in the centre of Hungary. At the moment of refugee influxes, also, there were clearly great numbers of unassimilated non-Magyars. Such was the case after the entry of the Cumans in the thirteenth century, and again 200 years later, when Serbian immigrants began to take refuge in Hungary in large numbers after their national disaster at Kossovo. In 1483 Matthias Corvinus wrote to the Pope that in four years 209,000 Serbs had been established in Southern Hungary; and these Serbs formed a high proportion of his fighting force, and a most welcome reinforcement in view of the Turkish danger. Nevertheless, the predominantly Magyar areas in Hungary constituted a far higher proportion of the total in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than they

did in the nineteenth and twentieth. Magyar writers estimate that in 1500 four-fifths of the total population of Hungary was Magyar.

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IV

For over 300 years after the Magyars' own invasion Europe had not been seriously threatened by danger from the East. In 1219, however, the Cumans, who were then occupying the steppes from the Caspians to the Carpathians, were heavily defeated on the Volga by the Mongols, and a large number of refugees sought safety in Hungary. In 1241 the Mongol armies themselves invaded Hungary. Left almost alone to bear the brunt of this frightful incursion, Hungary saw her fields turned to deserts, her population slaughtered by tens of thousands, and she might have perished altogether had not the supreme Khan of the Mongols died far away in Tartary, and the armies been withdrawn to assist at the election of his successor. The country recovered but slowly from this blow, its internal situation being greatly complicated by the presence of the Cuman refugees, now settled in the Alföld, who wrought great havoc among the more civilized Magyars and almost turned the Court and part of the country back to paganism. The struggles of the oligarchs and of foreign pretenders to the throne increased the confusion; the rising power of Bohemia menaced from the West; and amid a growing anarchy "the last golden twig from the stem of St. Stephen", the last Arpád of the male line, died in 1301, leaving only a daughter in a nunnery.

Half a dozen candidates put forward claims to

the throne, based partly on descent, partly on other considerations. The nation asserted its right to elect its ruler, and chose Charles of Anjou, the Papal candidate, whose grandmother had been of old stock. Both Charles and his son, Louis, who followed him, proved strong and able rulers, and the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, particularly the former, were in some respects the most brilliant in Hungarian history. Louis ruled over Poland, and with it, over much of Central Europe. In the same century Hungary's influence became predominant throughout all the Northern Balkans. Bosnia, Serbia, and Bulgaria, as well as the political units which afterwards developed into the principalities of Moldavia and Walachia, were all vassals of the Hungarian king, while the Banats of Severin and Mácsó (in the north of the present Serbia) were part of the dominions of the Hungarian Crown. In the fifteenth century Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary by election, ruled also, as the Emperor's vassal, over Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, and even over Austria. Thus there were times when the king of Hungary was also one of the most powerful monarchs of the Continent.

There were also intervals of great material prosperity. The Angevin kings, in particular, did much to foster the development of the towns, many of which became flourishing centres of trade and industry, although their German character always kept them a little apart from the general national life. The pomp and wealth of the Hungarian Court and of the great houses astonished those who visited them.

But in spite of much glory and considerable, if intermittent prosperity, Hungary had lost her old national solidarity and security. The world around her was changing. She no longer lived in splendid

isolation, surrounded by petty princelings or nomad, outlaw tribes of the steppe. Poland had developed into a mighty State ; Bohemia was at the zenith of its glory ; Venice in the south-west was a great power both by land and sea. More threatening still were the developments in the west and south : the expansion of Austria and the advance of the Turks.

The Babenbergers of Austria, Hungary's old neighbours and enemies, had been a modest German dynasty, loyal partisans of their emperor, tenacious defenders of their own dukedoms, but no visionaries. But the Habsburgs, who began to reign in Austria a little before the Arpáds died out in Hungary, were of different mettle : superbly acquisitive, insatiably ambitious, no second place would satisfy them—nothing less than the Imperial Crown ; and they succeeded, before long, in making that most august of Europe's secular dignities almost hereditary in their family. But if their heads struck the stars they kept their heels firmly planted on earth. They never committed the mistake of the Hohenstaufens. They retained their own special dukedoms and counties as the base for all expansion ; and thus the capital of the chief power of Continental Europe remained in Vienna, no more than a day's ride up the Danube valley from the frontiers of Hungary.

Meanwhile the only power in Europe which could challenge theirs was advancing up the valley to meet them. In 1353 the Osmanli Turks crossed the Hellespont from Asia Minor. In 1360 they conquered Southern Bulgaria ; in 1375 they took Niš ; in 1389 they destroyed the Serbian army on the Field of Blackbirds, and by the end of the century they had overrun all Bulgaria. Hungary, with her ring of vassal States and banats in the Balkans, was now the Turk's neighbour, and as early as 1395 she had become involved in that great defensive war

against the invaders of Europe which was to occupy her best resources for more than a century.

The day of the small national State in Eastern Europe was ending. One by one they were succumbing to the Turk, whom nothing, it seemed, could resist except an equally powerful super-national empire. It was impossible for Hungary to maintain her isolation; the only question was whether, in a larger unit, she was to be the dominant partner, or a subordinate one.

Under one or two of the last Arpáds, under the two great Angevin kings, and once more for a brief period under Matthias Corvinus, in the fifteenth century, it seemed as though Hungary might play the more glorious part. But the same natural forces which made for unity within the Middle Danube Basin also differentiated that area strongly from the country which surrounded it, and the Magyars were too different racially from their neighbours to form the nucleus of a great coalition of equal forces. They were natural conquerors, and they could not conquer more than a limited area nor, having conquered it, conciliate it; the more so as they alienated the sympathies of the Balkan peoples by the attempt to impose upon them by force the Catholic faith.

Moreover, for Hungary to fill such a position, it was necessary that the sovereign and the nation should present a united front against all enemies. This had ceased to be possible when the male line of the Arpáds became extinct in 1301. Rival pretensions based on primogeniture, election within the family, and free election led to a horrible civil war, and when Charles of Anjou at last succeeded, the point was left open, the National Assembly recognizing him as "its king by election and descent, and natural lord". Thereafter the practice varied.

Once, in 1458, the nation elected a purely national king of comparatively humble birth, in the shape of Matthias Corvinus, son of the great regent, John Hunyadi. In all other cases regard was paid to the hereditary principle and Hungary was thus drawn inevitably into the dynastic imbroglios of Europe. From 1301 to 1526 her rulers were four Angevins, one Luxemburger, two Habsburgs, three Jagiellos, and one native noble.

Under these circumstances there was a grave danger that the monarch, if he came of a powerful house, would regard Hungary merely as a part, and in all probability a remote, dangerous, and recalcitrant part of his dominions, and would subordinate her national interests to those of his other subjects. The Angevin kings, and even Sigismund of Luxemburg, who reigned after them from 1387 to 1437, although he was also king of the Romans and emperor, and king of Bohemia, alike ruled as good Hungarians. But the danger always remained, and the old harmony and complete community of interests between the sovereign and the nation were never wholly restored.

And the consequences were disastrous, for without a strong national king for its corner-stone the nation easily fell a prey to the local ambitions of the great landed magnates. Already under the last of the Arpáds the oligarchy had attained overwhelming power, which they never quite lost. Charles of Anjou, it is true, crushed the magnates of his day ; but imbued as he was with the ideas of Western feudalism, instead of appropriating the estates of the defeated magnates (as the Arpáds had always striven to do) and strengthening his own power and that of the small nobles, he created a new aristocracy from among his own supporters, native and foreign, lay and ecclesiastical. So soon as the

line of strong kings, such as Charles himself and his son Louis, died out, the power of the oligarchy revived, and the successors of the Angevins found themselves in a very difficult position.

It is true that the extreme forms of absolutism were thus prevented, and Hungary came far nearer to representative government, of a sort, than almost any other European country of the day. Both the form and reality of representative government were introduced as early as 1435, when the Diet granted a request by Sigismund "with the unanimous vote, advice, deliberation and consent of the prelates, barons, and of our nobles, representatives of the whole body of the kingdom, and empowered to represent the absent". Under Matthias Corvinus the principles of the Diet's control of taxation and its right to "discuss and decide" matters of public interest were admitted. Every king was obliged to swear to retain intact existing laws and privileges; and there was in addition the famous *jus resistendi*, although its exact scope is uncertain.

These constitutional rights were exceedingly valuable wherever the king was likely to prove more tyrannical and less careful of the true national welfare than the body of the nation which opposed him. Similarly, the repeated pledges exacted from foreign kings to employ only Hungarian councillors, to bestow no rank, office, or estate upon a foreigner, etc., were of the utmost value in averting the danger of foreign control and maintaining the national independence genuinely intact. When, in the next period of her history, Hungary came under definitely foreign rule, these constitutional safeguards, although often infringed, yet proved their worth again and again. On the other hand, the history of the gradual degradation of the peasant class showed that the rule of the Hungarian nobles could not be trusted

to be, on the whole, less oppressive than that of a strong monarch; and the deliberate efforts of the oligarchy to weaken the monarchy were destined to prove disastrous in an age when the closest co-operation between king and nation was of vital importance in view of the ever-increasing danger from the Turks.

So threatening had the Turkish advance become that a large part of the national resources were permanently employed during the fifteenth century in a prolonged struggle in which Hungary exhausted herself in her own defence and that of Europe. This defence was conducted with particular heroism by John Hunyadi, a native noble, who in 1446 was elected regent for the young king Ladislaus. In 1458 the estates sank their differences and elected Hunyadi's son, Matthias, as their king; and in the urgency of the danger, consented to sacrifices and diminutions of their privileges for which earlier rulers had pressed in vain. But Matthias' hand proved too heavy for the magnates, and after his death in 1490 they passed over his son and deliberately elected a weak king "whose beard they could hold in their fists". Their choice fell upon Wladislaus IV of Bohemia, of the Polish dynasty of Jagiello. But Wladislaus was not only powerless to cope with his own aristocracy; he was also unable to defend Hungary against Maximilian of Austria, who promptly invaded his territory and only concluded peace when a double marriage contract was arranged which ensured that—if the hereditary principle was followed—the crown of Hungary must sooner or later fall to the Habsburgs. Against this threat most of the smaller nobles combined in a "national party" around János Zápolya, the richest of the magnates. This party struggled desperately to maintain its position. In

1504 it secured the passage of an important law, never repealed or amended subsequently, the effect of which was to render *ultra vires* any taxation not passed by the Diet; and in 1505 they passed a resolution that should the king be without male heirs, only a Magyar should be elected to the throne. But the nation wasted its strength in party struggles which Wladislaus and his son Louis, who succeeded him in 1516, were powerless to control. The Turks, taking advantage of the dissensions, advanced once more, and at the battle of Mohács in 1526 the king and the flower of his army perished, and the period of Hungary's separate existence came to an end.

V

From 1526 onward Hungarian history enters on a new phase. Thereafter, for four centuries, Hungary was never to enjoy complete freedom of movement or development. In their very legitimate anxiety to stress the technical continuity of her sovereignty, her writers have been apt to under-emphasize her real lack of *de facto* authority over her own affairs; but the present situation, and the events which led up to it, cannot be understood aright unless this cardinal fact is kept in mind.

In 1526 the long duel between the Habsburgs and the Magyar nation—for in spite of many fair words on both sides, and long periods of genuine co-operation, a duel it has always been—commenced in earnest. The title of the Habsburgs to the Hungarian crown was at first exceedingly dubious. After 1526 the nation was confronted with its old dilemma in a particularly acute form. Hungary seemed too weak to stand alone against the Turk, and an obvious community of interests

united her with the Empire against the Franco-Turkish combination. On the other hand, was not the Habsburg an even greater danger to her independence than the Turk? The opinion of the nation was divided; and while most of the nobles favoured the election of a national king in the person of Zápolya, the Voivode of Transylvania, a part of the magnates and the Free Cities looked for deliverance to the Habsburgs. In the event both Ferdinand Habsburg and Zápolya were elected, the latter ruling for fourteen years over two-thirds of the country, in appearance a genuine national sovereign; but his kingdom survived by the grace of the Sultan, who occupied the centre of it on his death in 1540. Thereafter for a long 150 years Hungary was divided into three parts. The whole central plain, as far north as the foot-hills of North Hungary and as far west as the gates of Győr, Vasváry, and Zerinvár, was annexed to the Turkish Empire. Transylvania, with at times a considerable part of the eastern rim of the plains (the frontiers varied frequently), remained under a series of native Princes, tributary to the Sultan at first, and again after 1660, but in the interval independent. A narrow half-moon of territory in the north and west remained under the Habsburgs.

We shall not attempt here to follow the political fortunes (which were confused enough) of these three units, but only to estimate the contribution made by them to later problems. The historical importance of the Transylvanian principality for the later Hungary is that it kept alive the Hungarian spirit, Hungarian culture, and to some extent the Hungarian political tradition. Political conditions in the principality were, indeed, quite peculiar. Its population was largely non-Magyar, for it contained a considerable and increasing population of Vlachs

or Roumanians, who at one time, for brief moment, seized the power, although ordinarily they were serfs without political rights. Both the Saxons and the Székely, however, regulated their own internal affairs, their representatives meeting with those of the Magyars to discuss matters of common interest.

But the predominant partners were the Magyars, particularly in those periods when the frontier of Transylvania extended far down into the plain. The rulers and most, at least, of the politically active population, were Magyar; the culture (which was often brilliant) was Magyar; the institutions kept alive the traditions of Magyar national independence, and the policy was a Magyar national policy.

Transylvania also safeguarded the spiritual form which largely enabled that independence to survive, in the shape of the Protestant faith. The Reformation had entered Hungary almost unperceived, distrusted of the Magyars as a German innovation. But many of the leaders of Hungary's Catholic organization perished at Mohács, and the estates of the Church were either occupied by the Turks or left vacant by the rival kings, who used the revenues to buy partisans and soldiers. Left without leaders, the priests accepted the new doctrines, which were favoured by the Turks as likely to weaken the Habsburg influence. In the sixteenth century, Protestantism came to predominate throughout Hungary, and in Transylvania it made good its foothold. The Calvinist, Lutheran, and Unitarian faiths were (after intervals of persecution) admitted, with the Catholic, to toleration and equality of rights—a privilege not, however, extended to the Orthodox religion of the Vlachs.

The Protestants of Transylvania remained a permanent source of support for their persecuted

fellows in Royal Hungary, just as, Transylvania helped to defend the Hungarian national spirit and institutions against the Habsburgs. The brilliant Princes of Transylvania, István Bocskay, Gábor Bethlen, and György Rákoczy, who repeatedly and successfully fought the Empire, always championed not only the independence of Transylvania, but also the constitutional and religious liberties of the inhabitants of Royal Hungary, whose rights they secured in a whole series of treaties. Thus Transylvania's importance extended far beyond its own frontiers, and the loss to Hungarian national life was a grievous one when the Turks ruined it in a last effort before themselves succumbing to the Habsburgs.

The chief importance of the Turkish rule over Central Hungary, on the other hand, lies in the desolation which it left behind. Many Magyars fell in the original advance, and in the practically incessant frontier fighting which went on during the whole occupation. Others were sold into slavery—others again fled northward and westward into Royal Hungary. The nobles in particular took shelter under the ægis of the Habsburgs, while a fair proportion of the peasants remained behind under their new masters, whose reign was probably not more oppressive than that of the Magyar lords themselves. In the south, however, the Magyars were soon far outnumbered by the Serbs, large numbers of whom had, as was mentioned, taken refuge in Hungary before the Turks, and remained there when the Turkish rule replaced the Magyar, while others accompanied the Turks as their allies and camp-followers.

Far more terrible still were the ravages inflicted during the twenty years' war of liberation at the end of the seventeenth century. The central and

richest part of Hungary was during those years laid so waste that for many leagues no habitation of living man survived. When the Habsburgs recovered this once so pleasant land, they recovered a desert.

For, of course, the Habsburgs ended by becoming the sovereigns of all Hungary. Ferdinand I was only one of two rival kings, and by a secret treaty of 1538 with Zápolya, he admitted the latter's claim to the royal title and to Transylvania. Even in Western Hungary, the Estates in the sixteenth century never fully admitted the hereditary nature of the Habsburgs' claim. During this period, moreover, Royal Hungary was a mere strip, greatly exceeded in size both by Turkish Hungary and by Transylvania. For over a century and a half the Habsburgs were unable to alter this situation. In 1604, indeed, they subdued Transylvania; but Bocskay's revolt restored Transylvania in 1606 with greater independence and even wider frontiers. Only at the end of the seventeenth century the great retreat of the Turks began, as a result of which the Western armies captured Buda in 1686, Belgrade in 1688, and in 1698 the Peace of Karlowitz left in the hands of the Emperor the whole of Hungary except Syrmia and the Banat of Temesvár, these being incorporated a few years later.

In 1687 Leopold I extorted from a rump Diet at Pozsony recognition of the hereditary right of the male line of the Habsburgs to the throne of Hungary, with cancellation of the *jus resistendi* contained in clause 31 of the Golden Bull. In 1713 Charles III issued a law extending the right of succession to his female heirs. This arrangement had been accepted in advance by the Croatian Diet in 1712. Transylvania agreed to it in 1722, and in the same year the Hungarian Diet decided to accept it. The law giving effect to this (known as the

Pragmatic Sanction) was promulgated in 1723. It was decreed that the descendants of either sex of the king then ruling, or after them, of his two predecessors, should succeed thereafter in Hungary, on the principle of primogeniture. Only if the female line also died out altogether, the Estates recovered their old right to elect and crown their sovereign.

At the same time, and in close connection therewith, the ancient liberties of Hungary were confirmed.

This was the basis upon which the relations of the Hungarian nation and the Habsburg dynasty remained until 1918.

These relations were seldom fortunate. They had been drawn together by a very strong and real community of interests: the common need of self-defence of the States of Central Europe against the Franco-Turkish combination in East and West. Unhappily for Hungary, the Habsburgs of the sixteenth century were unable to assure her integrity. The fragment which remained behind the Habsburgs' defensive line could not adequately defend the national liberties against a dynasty backed with the whole force of the mighty empire. At first the Habsburgs made no conscious effort to denationalize Hungary or to infringe her constitution, but practical administrative considerations led to a large degree of centralization of Hungarian affairs in Vienna, while the powers of the Diet and the Estates grew steadily less. In the early seventeenth century open conflicts broke out over the Habsburgs' efforts to enforce the Counter-Reformation. Hungary's constitutional liberties and the rights of the Hungarian Protestants were to some extent saved by the intervention of the Transylvanian princes; but, by persuasion and persecution, the Habsburgs gradually Catholicized most of Western Hungary,

thus introducing anew deep spiritual differences between West and East which are still perceptible.

When, at the end of the seventeenth century, Hungary was freed from the Turk and again united, the opportunity arose at last to restore the ancient relationship between the monarch and his nation. But this opportunity was missed. Hungary was dis-united, ravaged, and depopulated, while the Habsburgs were at the zenith of their power. It was the age of "enlightened despotism", the era of the Leviathan; and the Hungarian Estates—which had, in truth, sunk to a collection of County assemblies which were neither effective nor enlightened—seemed to the monarchy only an antiquated obstacle to their advance. To this was added the fact that their measures evoked a desperate resistance, notably in the movement under Rákoczy, in the course of which the Diet went so far as to depose the Habsburgs and to seek foreign assistance against them.

Hungary was still strong enough to obtain, at the Peace of Szatmár in 1711, a general amnesty, a guarantee of religious liberty, and confirmation of her ancient constitutional rights and privileges. These had, however, already been whittled away under previous compacts. The King had to confirm all common liberties, privileges, status, rights, laws, and customs granted and confirmed by his predecessors; but these did not include the *jus resistendi*, and it was stipulated that they might be interpreted by the King and the Estates and Diet in consultation. He agreed that the Holy Crown should be preserved in Hungary, and that he would incorporate in Hungary the portions of the kingdom and fiefs which had been or were to be recovered. He agreed that these guarantees were to be accepted and sworn to by his successors at every future

coronation. But the promise to employ only Hungarians in the Government was gone, as was the stipulation that foreign soldiery might not be quartered in Hungary.

In fact, the value of these guarantees was often very dubious. The continuity of the Hungarian constitution was maintained, and Hungary was able at times to put up a certain resistance against very oppressive measures or demands. A strong sovereign was, however, able in practice to impose his will upon the nation, and during the latter seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries the Habsburgs carried through a series of measures which profoundly altered the structure of Hungary, and sowed the seeds of the problems which were to lead to the Treaty of Trianon in 1920.

Mention has already been made of the great depopulation of Central Hungary under the Turkish occupation and during the Wars of Liberation. The whole of Hungary had suffered grievously; but the losses in the central plain had been particularly heavy, and from its southern portion the Magyar element had vanished altogether. In 1692 the total population of the counties of Baranya, Tolna, and Somogy numbered only 3,221 souls, half of which were in the single town of Pécs. The Alföld was practically deserted, except for a few Greeks and Jews.

The monarchs now undertook a recolonization of these districts. Their motives were partly economic. It would have run contrary to all the theories of the age to leave these wide and fertile tracts unpopulated; moreover, it was in the interests of their general policy that they should increase the numbers and well-being of their subjects. The Austrian provinces of Galicia and the Bukovina, a little later, were treated in almost exactly the same way. In

part, however, there was a definite plan to weaken the unruly Magyar element by introducing a more docile population of other nationalities.

Thus when the Magyar landowners hastened to reclaim their titles over lands long since abandoned by their ancestors, a Commission disallowed a great number of these claims. The territories recovered from the Turk were treated as *neoacquisita*—fresh acquisitions of the Crown—and repopled with non-Magyar immigrants.

The colonization of Germans began during the last years of the wars of liberation, and was carried on very largely, not by the State, but by private large landowners, chiefly the generals who received vast grants of lands for their share in the successful campaign.

A large German, or "Swabian" population, drawn chiefly from Southern and South-Western Germany, was established in the Counties of Esztergom, Komárom, Pest, Moson, Veszprém, and Győr. A few Germans had survived from earlier days along the western fringe of Hungary, and in the towns, and when their numbers were added to those of the far more numerous recent arrivals, the proportion of Germans to the total population in these counties became considerable, even although the Magyar element had survived there in comparative safety. More numerous still were the later settlements in the south-western counties of Baranya, Tolna, and Somogy, which earned the name of "Swabian Turkey", while other immigrants entered the towns, reinforcing the German character of the existing cities and founding new ones.

Even dangerous for the Magyar national life were the Serbs, or "Rascians", as they were then called. It has been mentioned how many Serbs had taken refuge in Hungary before the Turkish

advance in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Some of these had survived the Turkish rule, and when the Austrians advanced, a Serbian leader named Branković proposed the creation of a buffer State, under his own rule and perpetually allied to the Empire, and comprising Slavonia, Syrmia, the Banat, and, if possible, the Serbian territories south of the Danube and the Save. The Austrians rejected this proposal, but when they invaded the Balkans in 1690 they promised the local populations all their ancient liberties, under the suzerainty of the kings of Hungary. When they retired from the Balkans 37,000 Serbian families, under the Patriarch of Ipek, followed them and settled for the most part in the south of Hungary. This large body received a "privilege" allowing them to elect their own Patriarch and to enjoy a certain ecclesiastical and national autonomy under the Emperor. Against the protests of the Magyars, they were exempted from the County organization and treated as direct vassals of the Crown. This privilege, although repeatedly confirmed, was as often infringed, and the Hungarian Counties did achieve a certain jurisdiction over them; but in 1752 an Aulic Council for their affairs was created at Eszek, and in 1777 the functions of that office were transferred to Vienna. Thus a certain degree of autonomy was maintained which constituted a definite and important derogation from the unity of the Hungarian State.

Another part of Hungary which was exempted from the control of the Hungarian Diet was the so-called "Military Frontier". When the Turks were advancing after Mohács, the inhabitants of what was then Southern Croatia fled northward, and the Habsburgs organized the remaining population, with immigrant Serbs and Vlachs, into a special defence force under military control. By the end of

the seventeenth century, there were three "Generalates" of this force, at Karlócza, Varasd, and Petrinja respectively. The Estates both of Hungary and Croatia resented this arrangement bitterly, and often petitioned for its abolition; but the "Granitschars" themselves appreciated the terms of their service, and the Habsburgs found the possession of this exceedingly efficient and absolutely loyal frontier force too useful to do without. Far from abolishing the system after the Turks had been driven back, they extended it. A new Slavonian district was established in 1702, a Székely in 1764, and a Walach in 1766. The frontier now ran continuously from the Adriatic to the confines of Moldavia, encircling Southern Hungary as with an iron ring. Its inhabitants formed the backbone of the Austrian army, and were destined to prove a thorn in the side of the Emperor's enemies, external and internal.

A certain number of Slovak colonists were also settled in Central and Southern Hungary. The change in the structure of the population in the north and the east was, however, less deliberate. The Magyars who had taken refuge in Transylvania and Royal Hungary during the Turkish occupation filtered back, following their predilection for open plains, into the centre, while the Slovaks expanded behind their backs and considerable numbers of Ruthenes entered Hungary from the north-east, reinforcing the existing colonies there. The same process took place on an even larger scale with the Walachs. Moldavia and Walachia were still under Turkish control, and it was easy to cross the mountains; the Walach population of Transylvania rose in a century from 250,000 to 800,000, while others settled in the Banat between the Maros, Tisza, and Danube. Other peasant colonists included

groups from countries so far apart as Bulgaria and Lorraine; and in the towns Greeks, Jews, and Armenians took up their residence. The proportion of Magyars in Hungary which had sunk to 45 per cent in 1720, sank still further to 39 per cent in 1778. Finally, Transylvania remained largely separate from the rest of Hungary, losing many of its old liberties, but being promoted in 1765 to the title of a Grand Principality; and not only Transylvania, but also the Banat, after its recovery, were customs units separate from the rest of Hungary.

The whole upper structure of the State had also become largely non-Magyar. The sovereign was not invariably and consciously hostile to the Hungarian nation—Maria Theresa, for example, was genuinely attached to her Hungarian subjects—but he was a foreigner. The larger, the more important, and the less unruly part of his domains lay outside Hungary. Many of the great estates, too, were now in the hands of non-Magyars. After the Wars of Liberation, enormous grants were bestowed on imperial generals and court favourites; much of Western Hungary came into their hands. These magnates owned palaces in Vienna, where they principally resided, despised the Magyar tongue, manners, and dress, and formed an element loyal to the Crown but largely hostile to the national cause.

The national feeling lived on among the small nobles and farmers—the “kuruczes” as they were called. Narrow, backward, obstinate, and often uncultured, but gallant and tenacious, they defended the rights of Hungary with a pertinacity which, if it was often obstructive, yet served its purpose in the main. The national representation grew ever weaker. A standing army was created in 1715; in 1722 a Hungarian Court Chancery was established

in Vienna, while the government of Hungary proper was left to a royal Lieutenant at Pozsony, both being independent of the Diet and responsible to the King alone. Maria Theresa ruled almost entirely by royal edict, and the sessions of the Diet became increasingly rare and ineffective. But the County organization survived, and remained in the hands of the nobles. The Főispán, who had to reside in the County, was the only royal official there. His Deputy and all other magistrates had to be elected; proceedings were public, resolutions had to be read out to the assembled nobles, and could not be altered by the Főispán or by his Deputy. These County Assemblies succeeded in preserving intact the cardinal liberties of the Hungarian nobles, despite many efforts on the part of the Monarchs to destroy them.

Unluckily, some of these liberties were becoming an anachronism which would really have been better removed. Although considerable reforms were introduced in the eighteenth century, Hungary by no means kept pace with the advance of Western Europe. The blame for this falls alike upon the nation and the Crown. On the one hand, Austrian commercial policy was grievously unfair to Hungary, which was deliberately kept, by means of discriminatory tariffs, as a source of cheap raw materials for Austrian industry, and food supplies for the Austrian population. On the other hand, the nobles were only too easily content to live on their forgotten estates, supplied in abundance with admirable food and wine, which their serfs toiled to produce, feasting, hunting, and quarrelling over the County elections, and indifferent to larger issues, provided that their cherished privilege of exemption from taxation was left to them. Meanwhile, the condition of the peasantry, who formed the vast majority of the population, was miserable and seemed, in spite of

occasional reforms, to deteriorate rather than improve. Even the nobles themselves paid dearly for their privileges ; for their enterprise was throttled by the antiquated system of family entail, which prevented the free disposal of land and made credit almost impossible, while in the towns the guild system hampered the development of such industry as Austrian policy allowed to exist. At this period the Austrian provinces of the Monarchy, although far less fertile by nature, were many times more prosperous and wealthy than Hungary.

VI

As the eighteenth century drew towards its close, it seemed as though the long duel between the Habsburgs and the Magyar nation was going to end with the conclusive victory of the former. The power of the great dynasty was at its zenith. Its dominions stretched over half Europe, its crown was the most august known to the civilized world ; and centuries of patient and concentrated labour had put into the hands of its wearers an undisputed power over small and great of which their predecessors could hardly have dreamed. The Magyars, on the other hand, had sunk down and down until it seemed that in a little time more they would fall into the ranks of the " nations without a history ", like the Slovaks or the Ruthenes. They had become almost exclusively a people of peasants and landed gentry, their language little more than a peasant dialect. Their aristocracy was largely Germanized, the small urban class was mainly German by origin. The language of business and society was German (the peculiar brand, that is, of German current in Vienna),

that of administration, Latin. And on every side of them, within the country which they still called their own, they were surrounded by alien nations who hated them and, in any conflict, looked to the Crown for support against them. It was small wonder that Joseph II, the most dictatorial as he was the most brilliant of all the Habsburgs, felt that the time had come to take a decisive step. Refusing that coronation which would have bound him by oath to respect Hungary's constitutional liberties, he set about the last measures to gain the Habsburgs' ends: to reorganize and centralize the administration, introduce German-speaking officials, reduce the liberties of the Counties and the privileges of the nobles, and bring the nationalities of Hungary on to a footing of comparative equality.

And yet the very hour which saw the Habsburgs draw back to deliver the *coup de grâce* witnessed the rebirth among the Magyars of a national movement which for a century and a half was destined, not merely to resist all further encroachments by the Crown, but to gain ground steadily against it. From 1526 to 1789 the Magyar nation had been continuously on the defensive; from 1789 to 1918, although often enough defeated, it retained throughout the initiative, and, in fact, made good much of the ground lost during previous centuries.

Had Joseph II confined his activities to domestic politics, he might have achieved more than any continental ruler of modern times. Unfortunately for himself, he engaged in over-ambitious and unsuccessful military adventures. Hard pressed for men and supplies, he had to appeal to the Hungarian estates, which refused to grant them unless their old liberties were restored. There was even a possibility that Hungary might ally herself against Prussia to attack Austria. Sick and unhappy,

Joseph revoked on his death-bed the greater part of his reforms; and his successor, Leopold II, convoked the Diet in 1790 and agreed with it on a whole series of Articles—seventy-five in all—which, while they reaffirmed the Pragmatic Sanction, gave the nation, in return, very important safeguards against further Royal experiments. Hungary was again to be treated as a free and independent country; the Diet was to be convoked regularly, and no laws to be altered, modified, or interpreted, taxes levied or recruits raised, except by the King and nation acting conjointly through the Diet; the King was to be crowned within six months of accession, and to issue, before Coronation, his *diploma inaugurale* swearing to maintain the national liberties.

A great part of these promises were immediately broken by Leopold's successor, Francis I, whose timid spirit had been frightened by the French Revolution into a perfect horror of anything smacking, however faintly, of popular control. For much of the next half-century, Hungary enjoyed a few of the forms, but little of the substance of true liberty.

Yet this period was in many respects the most interesting and glorious that she has ever known. Stimulated, in part, by the very attacks made upon it by Joseph II, in part by the general spirit of the times, a great national revival had set in. As usual in such cases, it began with a linguistic and literary movement to restore the Magyar language and create for the nation a literature worthy of its past. The work in this field of Kazinczy, the brothers Kisfaludy, and Vörösmarty was carried on by the man whom his successors revered as "the greatest Hungarian", Count István Széchenyi, who devoted his whole wealth and energy to the national cause. He carried

the movement beyond the field of pure literature, and equally far beyond the sterile defence of antiquated constitutional forms which had satisfied most of his fellow-nobles. Under the impetus of his enthusiasm, many economic enterprises of immense importance to Hungary were initiated, one of which in particular—the construction of a bridge between Buda and Pest—had a direct political importance also ; for nobles were required to pay toll for crossing it, and this constituted the first breach of their cherished privilege of exemption from taxation.

But perhaps the greatest of all Széchenyi's achievements was his successful assault on the self-satisfaction of his own colleagues. His bitter attacks on the spirit of "*extra Hungariam non est vita*" awakened a franker self-criticism and a wider consciousness of the need for reform.

Of great, almost decisive importance for the history of these years is the fact that the Crown was itself the most faithful supporter of the then Hungarian Constitution. Francis I and his advisers believed that the nation could be held in check by maintaining in a position of privilege a small and favoured upper class. Thus all movements in favour of reform were necessarily also movements against the Crown ; and conversely, any anti-dynastic, national movement was at the same time pledged to social and economic reform.

Largely for this reason the party led by Széchenyi, who was thoroughly loyal and essentially conservative and wished the work of national regeneration to be carried through by the privileged aristocracy itself, acting in concert with the Crown, was gradually driven into the background. Most of the higher aristocracy remained conservatives, allies of the Crown, upholders of the existing system,

and in this they were supported by part of the smaller gentry, who saw no advantage which reform could bring them to compensate for the loss of their serf-labour and of their exemption from taxation. Most of the smaller men, however, and some aristocrats, rallied round a new leader, Lajos Kossuth, a vehement nationalist, who held the policy of the Crown, and particularly its tariff policy, to be the source of most of Hungary's ills, and promised his followers great economic advantages from the abolition of the privileged position of the great landowners.

The 'thirties and 'forties of the nineteenth century were a period of intense political excitement. The agitation of the Left grew ever more violent, the resistance of the conservatives more stubborn. Social unrest manifested itself, but the Liberals forced through concessions in favour of the peasants, as a result of which the latter, on the whole, ranged themselves behind the national cause. Not so the Croats and the "nationalities".

It was the national question to which was due the profound difference between the nineteenth century and those which had preceded it. In the earlier period, this question had seldom been acute in Hungary. The great bulk of the minorities had lacked any active national consciousness (the Saxons of Transylvania constituted the only important exception). The Magyars themselves, if always proudly conscious of their own leading position, were yet still far from that self-glorification which characterizes most modern nationalism.

But in the nineteenth century the same extraordinary renaissance of national feeling which was inspiring the Magyars to new energy came, almost simultaneously, to the national minorities. Except for the Croats, they had no "historical rights" of

any great importance to which to appeal; but they began to be conscious of their national identities as something in themselves precious, an integral part of their spiritual heritage, and they desired at least corporate recognition and some protection for their national institutions.

Just at that moment, and for the first time, those institutions began to be seriously threatened. In earlier days, a rough sort of self-government on national lines had been allowed to most minorities as a matter of course, even if this did not usually extend to all members of a given nationality in Hungary, but only to small, individual groups. The idea of forced assimilation was alien to the half-unconscious political thought of the age. But as the national revival made progress among the Magyars themselves, so the idea awoke, and presently came to dominate ever wider circles, of Magyarizing the minorities.

The motive behind this was purely political and was at first directed solely against Vienna. Its first aim was the defence of the ancient Hungarian State against foreign domination, which had so largely taken the form of the spread of German language, culture, and ideas. Only by strengthening their own national feeling could the Magyars hope to save themselves from ultimate absorption. If the national minorities could be Magyarized, they would become potent allies in the struggle against Germanization; whereas if they retained their own identities, it was at least possible that they would combine with the Crown against the Magyars.

To the last, the Magyars found it almost impossible to realize that what they offered would be resented as a tyranny, rather than gratefully accepted as a boon. Nevertheless, things had already gone so far that, by the time the first serious efforts at

Magyarization were made, they were already foredoomed to failure, and each attempt at pressure only evoked counter-pressure.

Thus to the old pair of protagonists in Hungary's secular struggle—the nation and the Crown—was added a third: the nationalities. The whole history of Hungary from 1840 to 1918 consists essentially of a triangular contest between these three factors. Sometimes the Crown combined with the nationalities; at other times it made its peace with the Magyars and left the nationalities to their fate. In the latter stages some of the nationalities began to receive help from across the frontiers, and in the last years of all, owing to a peculiar combination of circumstances in Europe, this help grew so powerful that the nationalities—at first easily the weakest of the three factors—were able to defeat both their adversaries, leaving the Habsburgs without a throne and Hungary dismembered.

Behind and below this open contest lay the slow fight of the poor and non-privileged classes for social equality. Singularly little regarded, and for the most part also quite remarkably impotent, the existence of a deeply rooted social discontent yet coloured and affected the whole story and played a considerable part in the final catastrophe; but during the earlier phases, its importance lagged far behind that of the national question.

The first decisive step in the national campaign—a step directed solely against Vienna—was taken by the Diet of 1839, in declaring Magyar to be the official language of the legislature and administration.¹ Magyar was next introduced as the language of instruction, partly, it was argued, for

¹ The Diet of 1830 had already obtained the concession that the central administration and judicial organs should use Magyar in their relations with subordinate organs using that language, and that knowledge of it was necessary for obtaining a public post.

the direct benefit of the nationalities, whose members would otherwise be debarred from public careers.

These measures, however, evoked a vehement resistance, particularly when it was proposed to extend their scope (albeit with certain modifications) to Croatia. Here the Magyars were not even on solid constitutional ground; for they were acting arbitrarily on their own interpretation of a very disputable legal point, and in defiance of what all Croatia believed to constitute its historic rights.

The vigorous protests from Croatia again excited Kossuth and the other more extreme Magyar politicians to an even more uncompromising attitude. Széchenyi advised moderation, but was swept aside. 1848 saw Hungary in a fever of excitement, with the Liberals, whom Deák had succeeded in uniting on a programme of social and political reform, in the majority in the Lower House. When revolution broke out in Paris and Vienna, this programme, afterwards known as the "March Laws", was put forward and sanctioned by the Crown, in the hope that the Magyars, if satisfied, would help to put down the revolution elsewhere. The franchise was extended, and placed on a very broad basis. The exemption of the nobles from taxation was abolished, together with the patrimonial courts, all corvées and other vestiges of serfdom, and the *jus aviticum*. The tithe was abolished, and religious freedom guaranteed. Politically, an "independent, responsible Hungarian Ministry" was introduced with such powers as to make Hungarian self-government a reality.

The new electoral law, however, had in its terms completely disregarded Croatia's separate status, and it seemed clear that the Magyars wished to make Croatia into an integral part of Hungary and Hungary itself into a unitary Magyar state.

The resistance thereby evoked was led by Jellačić, whom the Emperor appointed Ban of Croatia on the very day (23rd March) that the first responsible Hungarian cabinet was formed. Almost all the nationalities of Hungary proper, the Swabians excepted, joined the malcontents.

Gradually matters worked up to a climax. The relations between the Croats and the nationalities and the Crown grew ever closer, the Magyars were driven more and more into opposition. The position was intensely complicated, since each side could claim—and could give chapter and verse for its assertion—that it was fighting in support of constitutional legality, and of the expressed wishes of the Crown. Finally, open fighting broke out which in Hungary itself, particularly in the Southern Slav districts, of the South and in Transylvania, took the form of a horrible racial war. From the south and west the Imperial forces moved against Hungary, Jellačić being appointed Royal Commissary. When the fighting began to go in Austria's favour, a new constitution was proclaimed for the Austrian Empire, in which Hungary was partitioned and reduced to the rank of a province. Kossuth replied by proclaiming the complete independence of Hungary and the deposition of the Habsburgs. The Magyars might still have won the day, had they had to face only the forces within their own country, and in Austria, but Francis Joseph called on foreign aid. The Czar of Russia, at his request, entered Hungary and forced the Magyar forces to capitulate.

VII

Thus the struggle ended miserably with defeat for all and true victory for none. The Magyars had lost even their former constitution. The Croats

and nationalities, however, had profited very little more than they ; for the new Constitution, if it no longer left the Magyars in a position of superiority over the other races of Hungary, did so by the means of depriving all alike of their liberties in favour of an impartial despotism.

Thus far, it looked like a victory for the Crown ; and in fact, Hungary was governed during the few years (known, from the name of the Austrian Minister responsible, as the " Bach era ") under an absolutist system such as Joseph II had tried unsuccessfully to inaugurate sixty years previously. But even the Crown's success had been due only to foreign help, and could not be maintained if the international situation again became unfavourable for Austria.

And during the next few years the young Francis Joseph plunged from one unfortunate adventure in foreign politics to another. With each catastrophe he became more dependent on the genuine support of his subjects ; and at last, after prolonged negotiations, the " Compromise " of 1867 was concluded, which regulated relations between the nation and the Crown up to 1918.

The details of this famous instrument have now become comparatively unimportant. Some of them were, indeed, never very easily comprehensible, for the essential purpose of the whole document was to reconcile two irreconcilables—to make Hungary at once separate and united with Francis Joseph's other dominions, at once sovereign and independent, and in practice, in so far as related to certain matters in which those dominions had an interest, subject to a control which took account of those interests. The wealth of subterfuges by which the susceptibilities of all parties were respected is easier to admire than to explain. Broadly speaking

the "Compromise" consisted of a Treaty of Alliance between the King-Emperor and the Magyar nation, which reconciled their conflicting points of view in a most ingenious fashion, which could be maintained given goodwill on both sides, but lacking that goodwill was bound to lead to endless difficulties, if it proved tenable at all. The Pragmatic Sanction, with the later laws and interpretations, became once again the basis for the relations between the Crown and the nation, as also for Hungary's connection with Austria. As that instrument provides for the mutual and common defence of the various parts of the monarchy, the conduct of foreign relations, and the defence system, were recognized as "common affairs", the costs of these being fixed by delegations of the two Parliaments, sitting simultaneously.¹ Certain other questions, mainly economic, were recognized as being of interest to both States, although not "common affairs". Hungary consented to come to an agreement on these points, "as one free nation with another" (it may be noted that one point upon which the Magyars had insisted was that Francis Joseph should grant a constitution to his Austrian dominions). In all internal affairs she was completely independent. The King's power was limited by the previous constitutional laws, including those of 1848 (one or two of which were, however, slightly modified). Austria and Hungary had, of course, no voice in each other's domestic affairs, the only way—but it was an exceedingly important one—in which either country could affect the other being in the conduct of foreign affairs; since a foreign policy conducted in the interests of the one State was not necessarily desirable to the other.

¹ At a later date the administration of Bosnia and Herzegovina (another of the insoluble constitutional problems in which the Dual Monarchy was so rich) was also treated as a "common affair".

Croatia received a species of Home Rule within the Hungarian State, which did ample and even generous justice to her historic rights. Transylvania, on the other hand, became an integral part of Hungary, certain pledges which had been made to the old "nation" of the Saxons being swept aside.

The authors of the Compromise, on the Hungarian side, were moderate and even conservative men. They belonged to that party which had deplored Kossuth's extremist policy, and genuinely saw in the Habsburg connection not only a thing to which Hungary was pledged by her own past constitutional compacts, but also a guarantee for her future greatness; for they felt that Hungary would be stronger under Habsburg rule than she could ever be as a wholly separate monarchy, not to speak of a republic. They therefore made terms which, at the time of their conclusion, on the morrow of Königgrätz, were undoubtedly moderate. For most of the next half-century Hungary was governed by men of similar ideas. Even where only half-enamoured of the Habsburg connection, on its own merits, they were not only honourably determined to stand by their predecessors' pledged word, but also saw clearly the weakness of the Magyar position. It was impossible, within the existing state of Europe, to throw off the Habsburg rule; but so long as the Crown, on its side, was willing to abide loyally by the Compromise (as Francis Joseph always did) one great danger was eliminated: the Crown, limited as its powers now were, could not play off the "nationalities" against the Magyars. For looked at from one point of view, the Compromise had been a tacit alliance between the Crown and the Magyars against the nationalities, as also against the remoter danger of a combination between the Crown and the socially depressed

classes. From these motives, partly idealistic, partly utilitarian, most of the responsible Magyar statesmen remained faithful to the principles of 1867, and the party which held power in Hungary, with brief intervals, up to 1918, took its stand on those principles.

The Compromise was, however, never really popular in the nation, particularly in the strongholds of national feeling and Protestantism east of the Danube. These circles exerted a constant pressure upon the Government to interpret the Compromise in the least generous sense, to extract the utmost advantage out of the negotiations with Austria, and to emphasize on every occasion the independence and sovereignty of Hungary. Some of those who adopted this attitude wished, more or less openly, to achieve complete separation; others went no further than the pure programme of 1848, without the subsequent concessions. Most saw that, left entirely to themselves, the Magyars would find grave dangers threatening them from the "nationalities"; and while some believed that a vigorous policy would suffice to keep in check the rising national aspirations of the Roumanians, Serbs, etc., others advocating winning their support against Austria by far-reaching concessions.

For some time after 1867 this party was in the minority; for the man who, better perhaps than any other one man, represented their "religious and social ideals"—Kálmán Tisza—deliberately abandoned his original principles, which had been of the more extreme type, in the interests of a strong Dual Monarchy. Tisza himself ruled practically as a dictator from 1875 to 1890, and his Liberal Party was almost omnipotent in Hungary for fifteen years longer still. After that time the situation grew much more complex, but it was

generally dominated by men faithful to the principles of 1867, prominent among them being István Tisza, Kálmán Tisza's son, who was Minister-President in the fateful days of July, 1914, which brought Hungary with Austria into the War.

By this time, however, the Compromise had lost much of its credit. There had been one exceedingly violent conflict (over the question of army control) with Francis Joseph himself. Much worse things were to be expected after his death. The heir apparent, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, was known for a bigoted Catholic and a violent and autocratic man. It was no secret that he detested the Magyars, and it was rumoured that he intended to postpone his coronation and use the interval before taking the oath to reorganize the Monarchy on a new system which would diminish the rights of the Magyars in favour of the Slavs. And the prospect of a renewed alliance between the Crown and the nationalities was alarming indeed for the Magyars.

For the problem of the nationalities had not been solved. After the Compromise had been concluded, an exceedingly liberal Act was passed, under the influence of Deák, who had always advocated conciliation towards the nationalities. This famous instrument (Law XLIV of 1868), which was itself largely based on a remarkable report drawn up by a Parliamentary Committee in 1861,¹ regains by an affirmation of the *political* unity of all nationalities inhabiting Hungary, who form "the indivisible unitary Hungarian² nation". The use

¹ The texts, both of the Committee's report and of the Nationalities Law, are given by R. W. Seton-Watson, *Racial Problems in Hungary*, pp. 421 ff., 429 ff. The same work contains commentaries on both instruments, and is the *locus classicus* in English for the way in which they were subsequently interpreted.

² A grievance adduced by the non-Magyars is that the word "Magyar" is used here for "Hungarian". The Magyar language (like the French) does not distinguish between the total population of the country, and the dominant nationality within it.

of non-Magyar languages is permissible so far as consistent with this political unity, and with the requirements of administration and justice. A series of rules are laid down as standards to be followed in this respect. Magyar is the official language of the State, Parliament, Government and administration, County assemblies and their officials, and the University. In the County assemblies, however, any person may speak in his own language, and minutes may also be drawn up in a second language, if one-fifth of the members desire it. In communes the latitude is wider. Persons belonging to the various nationalities are to be employed as officials, so far as possible, provided they possess the necessary qualifications; nationality is to be no obstacle to the holding of any post or dignity. In justice, every individual has the right to use his mother tongue before his own communal or district court, translations being provided in the higher courts. The various Churches receive effective guarantees of their autonomy. In education, the language of instruction is to be prescribed by the Minister of Education, the guiding principle being that all citizens of any nationality living together in "considerable numbers" are to receive instruction in their mother tongues, up to the point where "higher academic culture" begins. Individuals, communes, and associations are free to found schools or colleges of their own and to prescribe the language to be used therein.

As a model for the treatment of national minorities within a national State, this law could hardly be surpassed. The present Minorities Treaties guaranteed by the Council of the League follow its provisions closely, but are, on the whole, far less liberal. It failed, however, to solve the problem in Hungary. Many of the nationalities would have

been well content with a strict application of its provisions; but the leaders were disappointed at not having received complete equality for all nationalities.¹ For most Magyars, on the other hand, the law was too liberal. They were by now convinced that their only safety lay in complete Magyarization of the State, and they set about achieving this by all means in their power, while resistance on the part of a member of a minority was regarded as a personal insult and an act of high treason. The law remained very largely a dead letter, and was greatly weakened, even on paper, by subsequent enactments. A new Education Act of 1879 made the Magyar language compulsory in all primary schools, while no person might obtain a teaching diploma or a post as schoolmaster, unless he knew so much Magyar as to be capable of teaching it in a primary school. A series of minor measures, all tending in the same direction, followed; and Count Apponyi's Education Act of 1907 not only imposed State control, and strict regulations, on all denominational schools, but enforced upon them the teaching of Magyar to such an extent as to make the freedom guaranteed under the Nationalities Law almost illusory. In administration, and even in justice, the avowed aim was to bring the State as near as possible to the ideal of a unitary national State.

The special Magyar conception of nationality had its advantages. A member of a minority willing to accept the Magyar ideal and to become Magyarized was welcomed as a recruit, and his origin was never cast up against him (except, to some extent, in the case of the Jews). Some of the nationally

¹ The minority draft of the Bill, as proposed by the sixteen non-Magyar Deputies, provided for absolute equality, in all respects, between all languages. See Seton-Watson, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

inactive minorities took this opportunity gladly. Among those with an active national consciousness, on the other hand, the pressure, far from effecting its object, only awakened the most stubborn resistance and gradually inculcated in them a conviction that salvation was best found outside Hungary altogether. Thus they did become, in fact, a menace to the integrity of the Hungarian State, although the danger was unlikely to become acute except in the case of an unsuccessful European war waged by Austria-Hungary.

The national struggle occupied much of the attention of all Hungarian statesmen after 1867. At the same time they threw their abundant energy into the task of developing their country's economic resources, and with very remarkable success. The national finances, after a difficult preliminary period, were set upon a sound basis; communications improved out of all recognition, and the capital, Budapest, transformed into a splendid modern city. That the motives behind this development were political rather than strictly economic will certainly not be counted as a crime to-day, when economic nationalism, for political motives, has become the all-prevailing fashion. Yet the domination of politics over economics in Hungary had one unfortunate result: the new economic life was forced to wear the shackles of a political system which had remained unchanged for centuries. The "gentry" were still the masters of the country, and allowed nothing to endanger their supremacy. As it was the same class which formed the backbone of the resistance to the nationalities, the same weapons were employed, both against the non-Magyar races and against the urban and rural proletariats. Not only was the administration centred almost entirely in the hands of a single class, but the Parliamentary franchise

was so arranged as to leave all other inhabitants practically without representation. The law of 1848 had provided for suffrage based on a low property qualification. This was altered in 1879 and 1881 by Kálmán Tisza. A very complicated suffrage qualification was introduced, based on a combination of property, taxation, profession or official position, and ancestral right (all those who had possessed the franchise previous to 1848 retained it). Voting was open. The result was curious, and exceedingly ingenious. The law had been amended to strengthen the hand of the Government, not so much against the nationalities as against the far more truculent opposition of the extreme Magyar nationalists. Thus while the proportion of the population entitled to vote was everywhere extremely low (it amounted to little more than 6 per cent of the population), the electoral districts were so arranged that the pure Magyar constituencies were comparatively large, and so could only elect a small number of deputies; while districts inhabited by the national minorities contained "rotten boroughs", sometimes with no more than two to three hundred voters each. In these the Government party, taking full advantage of the open vote and sometimes using methods which Western Europe had abandoned, was able to get its candidates elected without serious opposition. Thus it ruled mainly with the support of the non-Magyar constituencies, although not of the non-Magyars. The nationalities and the working classes were practically unrepresented.

Electoral reform was a long-standing demand on the part of all the disfranchised, and in 1905 the Government of Baron Fejérváry, who had been appointed by Francis Joseph to rule Hungary through a group of permanent officials, after repeated negotiations between the Crown and Parliament had

proved fruitless, promised to introduce universal suffrage. This part of Fejérváry's programme was accepted by the Coalition Government which succeeded him, but the suffrage Bill finally introduced by Count Andrassy in 1908 retained the open vote and, while nominally introducing manhood suffrage, so hedged it about by various qualifications that the non-Magyars would have lost by it more than they gained. The law was never passed, and István Tisza, when he returned to power in 1909, was obstinately opposed to extending the suffrage. It was, indeed, Tisza's refusal to widen the franchise, when pressed to do so by the young King Charles, which led to his final fall in 1917.

The record of Hungary's half-century of recovered real independence thus presents a strange admixture of brilliant progress and notable omissions. The latter were to be bitterly avenged when the crisis came in the following years.

VIII

In July, 1914, Count István Tisza was Hungarian Minister-President. István Tisza, son of the old Kálmán, is one of the most remarkable political figures of all time. A stern, unyielding Calvinist, a fervent and courageous patriot, he set Hungary first and last in his thoughts. All his upbringing and his mentality seemed to mark him out for a leader of the national opposition ; but like his father before him, he was deeply convinced of the necessity for Hungary of the Austrian connection, and he had played in politics the part of a *homo regius*. Almost deified by his countrymen to-day, he was, twenty-five years ago, perhaps the best hated man in Hungary.

Tisza's attitude towards the crisis which ended in the European War has been hotly discussed. Hungary had certainly no cause to regret the death of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand. Still less had she reason to desire a war. Defeat would be disastrous, perhaps fatal to her ; but victory would be little better. Any annexations made by the Dual Monarchy in the Balkans would increase still further the proportion of Slavs in the Monarchy, still further weaken the position of the Magyars in it. On the other hand, to let the assassination go by unpunished must encourage the Serbs, who were already intriguing openly with their brothers in the Monarchy ; and the Roumanians also would see in it a sign of Austria-Hungary's growing debility.

On learning that Berchtold was planning drastic action against Serbia, Tisza telegraphed to his Sovereign urging that the moment was "most unpropitious in every way", and plainly hinting that he would resign if Berchtold pursued his policy. At the fateful Ministerial Council of 7th July he agreed to "military measures", but insisted that the planned ultimatum to Serbia must not be made impossible of acceptance, and that he could "never consent to the Monarchy's annexing part of Serbia". He again threatened to "draw the consequences" if his point of view was disregarded. Afterwards the Viennese statesmen persuaded him that the Monarchy "had the halter round its neck" and that war must break out sooner or later. He gave his consent to the campaign against Serbia, on condition that the Monarchy made no territorial conquests, a condition on which he insisted in the main throughout the wars. The full story of his change of attitude has, however, yet to be written. Tisza himself kept silence, alike when he was being acclaimed, by an auto-intoxicated people, as the

author of the war, and when the same people in its disillusionment sacrificed him as the criminal who had plunged them into catastrophe.

The war was not unpopular at first in Hungary. The Socialists protested at the outset, but like their Austrian colleagues, afterwards chose to regard the struggle as one of defence against Russian barbarism and despotism. Of the nationalities, only the Serbs were actively opposed. But as time went on, Hungary's own territory was threatened by the Russian advances; the calls on her man-power grew more exacting; while the unreliability of many national contingents of Austrian troops resulted in the Magyars being required continually to take the post of danger. The old anti-Austrian feeling reawoke. Count Mihály Károlyi, a big landowner who had split with his own set, led the party which proclaimed that the quarrel was one in which Hungary had no interest, and that by severing her connection with the Central Powers she could make her own terms with the Entente. Károlyi's programme was one of democratic reforms, including agrarian reform and the general and secret suffrage, combined with concessions to the nationalities who, he believed, could still be won over for the Hungarian State idea, although never for that of the Magyar national State. The new king, Charles IV, who was crowned after Francis Joseph's death in the autumn of 1916, also favoured an extension of the suffrage, and forced Tisza, who remained implacably opposed to this measure, to resign. But his successors could not act promptly enough. Meanwhile, the war began to go against the Central Powers, and the Allies' promises to the nationalities grew ever more extensive. At the same time, the Socialists grew at once more powerful and more radical.

On 30th October, 1918, rioting broke out in Budapest. The King refused to sanction the use of armed force against the demonstrators, and on the next day appointed Károlyi Minister-President, with a Cabinet consisting mainly of Socialists, Radicals, and members of the Party of Independence. On the same day Tisza was murdered. The front had broken and the soldiers were pouring back to their houses. The new Minister of War, Linder, fearing a military counter-revolution, disbanded them as fast as possible, thus leaving Hungary at a great disadvantage compared with all her neighbours; for the Austrian Socialists, while adopting the same policy, had already prepared the organization of their own defence force; the new Successor States, e.g. the Czechs and Poles, had rallied to themselves their own national units of the old Austro-Hungarian armies, and Roumania and even Serbia possessed their national armies. On 1st November Austro-Hungarian delegates had met the Italian Military Command under General Diaz at Padua, to arrange an armistice. The Austro-Hungarian troops agreed to evacuate all occupied territory, and in the south-west a line of demarcation was laid down. Elsewhere, the line was to consist of the old political frontier; but the Allies were entitled to occupy the interior of the Monarchy if they desired. Diaz, however, commanded only in Italy. In the south was the French General Franchet d'Esperey, Commander of the Armée d'Orient, who on 6th November advanced to Belgrade and was preparing, according to his own account, to march on Germany through Hungary. Károlyi himself, with other members of his Government, visited Belgrade to conclude an armistice with Franchet d'Esperey, who in an agreement made on 8th November and signed on 13th November

fixed a line of demarcation inside the political frontier (Besztercze—Nagy-Szamos—Marosfalu—Szabadka—Baja—Pécs), behind which the Hungarian troops were to withdraw, although, as the line was only provisional, Hungarian police, gendarmerie, and civilian control was to continue to function.¹

On the same day the King-Emperor issued a proclamation renouncing all participation in the affairs of State and recognizing in advance any decision to be taken by the Governments of Austria and Hungary respectively regarding their future forms of state. Károlyi replied (16th November) by proclaiming a republic, of which he himself was soon after elected President. His Government was composed of a coalition of radical bourgeois parties and Social Democrats, the latter being by far the

¹ The facts regarding this agreement are still greatly disputed. The Austro-Hungarian General Staff apparently believed that the armistice concluded with General Diaz would apply to all Austro-Hungarian fronts, and Károlyi had instructed General Weber, the Austro-Hungarian plenipotentiary at Padua, that he might "temporarily represent also the interests of Hungary." When, therefore, Károlyi afterwards visited Franchet d'Esperey and received from him much less favourable conditions, he was reproached for having wantonly thrown away a good situation, and gambled away Hungary's territorial integrity. Writers of this school insist that the Belgrade arrangement was only a "military agreement", the Padua agreement alone having the force of an armistice. On the other hand, Franchet d'Esperey himself has asserted that he alone was in charge on the Balkan front, and that the Belgrade agreement constituted the regular and sole armistice for that front (see communication by him to Count Theodore Batthyány in the latter's *Für Ungarn gegen Hohenzollern*, pp. 183-5; for the other view see E. Horváth, "Diplomatic History of the Treaty of Trianon," in *Justice for Hungary*, 1928, pp. 81 ff). The Hungarian delegation, however, protested against his terms, and eventually persuaded him to forward their protest to Paris. The answer, when it arrived from Clemenceau, confirmed the line laid down by Franchet d'Esperey, but decreed that the arrangement was to apply only to military matters, i.e. Hungary should retain the civil administration between the old frontier and the line of demarcation. It was owing to delays in the arrival of these instructions that the agreement was not signed until 13th November. Whatever the General's actual instructions, if any, there seems little reason to doubt that Károlyi and his ministers were given reason to believe that they must negotiate with him for an armistice with the Balkan and Roumanian troops.

best organized and strongest of the parties represented. Two main measures of reform were promised: universal suffrage and agrarian reform. The execution of the former was, however, delayed, since the doctrinaires of the Socialist party wished to save the big estates, both on account of their economic superiority and from a fear that a class of peasant proprietors would constitute a reactionary element. This hesitation made the peasants hostile to the new regime (there was, in any case, ill-feeling enough between town and country owing to the food shortage) and gave the conservative elements time to rally. The new franchise Act was drafted, but when the Government saw the prospects of a strong opposition, especially among the Catholic parties in the country districts, they feared to risk the issue of an election. Town and country grew ever more deeply estranged, and in Budapest the Communists gained daily more adherents from their undecided and half-hearted rivals.

Meanwhile, the attention of the Allies, and particularly the British and Americans, in distant Paris was absorbed by what was to them the only really important question, that of Germany. The small powers of Central and Eastern Europe were left almost to their own devices. Only France, among the larger Powers, played an active role, and that was obscure and tortuous. The Allies were not, technically speaking, bound to apply the "Fourteen Points" to Hungary; indeed, Wilson had specifically informed the last Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry that the Czecho-Slovaks and Yugoslavs must themselves "be the judge of what action on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government will satisfy their aspirations". There was, however, a clear moral obligation to apply the principle of self-determination; and as regards

Hungary, there were no entangling pledges, since the secret Treaty with Roumania, which had promised her an outrageous slice of Eastern Hungary, had been invalidated by her conclusion of a separate peace with the Central Powers.

It required, under the circumstances, no great gift of prophecy to foretell a lively scramble for territory at Hungary's expense. The Allies were already committed to the establishment of a "Czecho-Slovak" State, although no definite promises had been made regarding its frontiers.¹ On 24th May, 1918, a Congress of the Slovak National Party had, after a lively debate, decided that "the Slovak race has the absolute and unconditional right to make its own decisions, and by this right it claims for the Slovak nation a share in the constitution of an independent State composed of Slovakia, Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia". In October a Slovak National Council was formed, and on 19th October Deputy Juriga, speaking in the Hungarian Parliament, claimed for that Council the right of self-determination, adding that it would consider as null and void all decisions taken by the Hungarian Parliament without its sanction.

These National Councils were springing up throughout the country, and while the official Hungarian Government maintained its old, unbending attitude towards all such organizations, Károlyi and Jászi took a different view. They, like all Magyars, wished if possible to save the integrity of Hungary; and Jászi believed that, while continuation of the old policy must end in disaster, yet the nationalities would remain loyal to Hungary

¹ M. Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, had promised Dr. Beneš to try to secure for the Czecho-Slovak people independence within its historic frontiers. This phrase was, however, without meaning in the case of Slovakia, which had no historic frontiers.

if they were granted very wide self-government (in his book he speaks of "equality of rights for the nationalities and the development of autonomy for them on the Swiss model").¹ He was then prepared to put matters to the test of a plebiscite.

As a preliminary Károlyi and Jászi were prepared to recognize the various National Councils, and began negotiations with them as soon as they were formed. They came to an agreement with M. Dula, the President of the Slovak National Council, on the basis of autonomy for the Slovaks within the Hungarian State. Dula, however, did not definitely commit himself or his party to a binding agreement, on the ground that Károlyi, being at that time in opposition, could not bind his own nation or government.²

On 30th October, when matters had already progressed much further, the Slovak National Party met again at Turocz Szentmárton. It was agreed to claim self-determination for the Slovaks; but opinions differed as to what consequences should be drawn from this claim. Finally a motion was adopted declaring that "the Slovak nation is a part of the Czecho-Slovak nation" and claiming "for this, the Czecho-Slovak nation, the absolute right to self-determination, on a basis of complete independence".

On the same night Dr. Hodža arrived from Budapest, bringing the news of the revolution in that city, and of the acceptance by Count Andrassy, the last Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, of Wilson's latest statement regarding the liberty of the Czecho-Slovaks to decide on their own future form of State. Most of the participants in the

¹ See Jászi, *Magyariens Schuld, Ungarns Sühne*, pp. 59-60, and Károlyi, *Gegen eine ganze Welt*, pp. 385 ff.

² Károlyi, *op. cit.* 389.

Conference had gone home ; but in view of this later news, those who had remained redrafted the declaration, omitting, incidentally, a not unimportant phrase in the earlier draft which had demanded separate representation for the Slovaks at the Peace Conference.¹

It must be observed that the above decisions were taken by the Slovak National Party. This represented the largest body of local opinion but not, of course, that of the considerable national minorities, nor even that of some Slovaks. Thus it cannot be said with certainty that a decision taken by a majority of the Turocz Szentmárton meeting would also have commanded a majority in a meeting representative of the total population of the countries concerned. Almost at the same time another meeting, held in Kassa, a town with a large Magyar-Jewish population, resolved in favour of remaining with Hungary.²

On 31st October the new Hungarian Government telegraphed its good wishes to the Slovak National Council. It is hardly possible that they could have done so with knowledge of the resolution just taken, and they must have received a rude shock when informed, in reply, that the meeting had decided on separation from Hungary. Indeed, when, on 4th November, the Czechs sent gendarmes and troops into Slovakia, ostensibly to put down rioting and maintain order, Károlyi at once sent an emissary to Prague demanding that Slovakia should be

¹ For this account of the meeting, and for the subsequent narrative, except where otherwise indicated, I have followed the *officiouse* account by J. Opočensky, *The Collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Rise of the Czechoslovak State* (Prague, Orbis Co., 1928). For an account written from the opposite point of view and containing statements regarding the drafting of the declaration (of which, as their accuracy is contested, I have made no use) see F. Jehlička, *Une Étape du Calvaire Slovaque* (Paris, n.d., 1931 ?).

² Opočensky does not mention this meeting.

occupied by Slovak regiments, while the administration should be shared between the Slovak National Council and the Budapest Government, under the control of the Hungarian Ministry of Nationalities.

The Czechs refused this suggestion. Hungary then mobilized the divisions of repatriated prisoners of war, with one division returned from the front, and compelled the weak Czech forces to withdraw. Károlyi protested to Prague that the Czecho-Slovaks had no right to occupy the Slovak districts until a decision had been taken by the Peace Conference. The Czecho-Slovak Premier replied that the Allies had recognized the Czecho-Slovak State, and that the Belgrade armistice had not referred to it. Czechoslovakia was only taking measures for the security of a territory which incontestably belonged to her. The Peace Conference would have nothing to settle beyond the demarcation of the frontier.

A Czech emissary was sent to Budapest. The Allied representative there, the French Colonel Vyx, held that the Czechoslovak occupation was contrary to the armistice terms and recommended that the troops be withdrawn. Károlyi proposed that Slovakia should be occupied by Slovak troops commanded by Hungarian, or by Allied officers, and all districts with a Slovak majority be administered by the Slovak National Council, under the Ministry of Nationalities in Budapest. Magyar enclaves were to receive autonomy and Magyar Commissioners to be represented on the National Council to defend the interests of the minorities. A plebiscite should then be taken.

The Czechs were unwilling to risk a plebiscite under these conditions, and meanwhile Dr. Beneš, in Paris, secured from Foch and from the French Foreign Ministry their consent to the occupation of a large part of Slovakia. Acting under instructions

from Paris, Colonel Vyx informed the Hungarians that Czecho-Slovakia had been recognized by the Allies, and had a right to occupy Slovakia, "if only as an Allied belligerent Power participating in the execution of the armistice." He made, however, no mention of the line of demarcation.¹

The Czechoslovak negotiator in Budapest—whose status was very uncertain, as public opinion in Prague accepted any advantageous arrangement made by him but disavowed anything unfavourable—now arranged a provisional line of demarcation, which left most of the predominantly Slovak districts in Czech hands, but was nothing like so favourable to them as the Paris line. The Hungarian Government evacuated the territory beyond the line to which it had agreed, but refused to withdraw its troops further. Heavy pressure was, however, placed upon them, and the Paris line, including both Pozsony and Kassa, occupied by the Czechs by early January, 1919. Colonel Vyx, in reply to the Hungarian protest, stated that:

"The Czecho-Slovak State, recognized by the Allies, has a right of absolute sovereignty over the territories which it has re-occupied within the limits of the provisional frontiers fixed for it."

The assumption of absolute sovereignty within provisional frontiers is not, in theory, very easy; but in practice Hungarian control now ceased behind the line of demarcation.

The situation in the South was far less complicated. The military Convention had allowed the Serbian troops to advance to a line running a respectable distance to the north of the present frontier, and comprising all territory with more than an infinitesimal population of any Southern Slav race, besides

¹ The texts of these notes are reprinted in the *Documents concernant l'exécution de l'armistice en Hongrie* (Budapest, State Printing Office, 1919).

many Magyars and Germans. The Serbs, who alone among the nations of South-Eastern Europe possessed at the time an effective army, immediately advanced up to the line of demarcation, and in places even beyond it. They then set about ensuring the permanence of their acquisitions. On 23rd November the Croatian Diet which as early as 29th October had proclaimed its independence of Hungary, announced the union with Serbia and Montenegro of the territory under its control. On 25th November a Congress was summoned at Ujvidék.

The delegates to this meeting represented 211 out of the 453 communes of the districts concerned, and consisted of 628 Serbs, 62 Slovaks, 34 Bunyevaci, 21 Ruthenes, 3 Sokaz, 2 Croats, 6 Germans, and 1 Magyar.¹ The composition was remarkable, since no less than 55·34% of the local population consisted, according to the official statistics, of Magyars and Germans, and 6% of Roumanians. Even allowing these figures to have been favourable to the Magyars, the system of representation adopted seems to have been scarcely proportional. The Congress, not unnaturally, voted in favour of separation from Hungary and union with Yugoslavia, on the basis of "the lofty principle of self-determination", and established a National Council and Government, which took over the administration from the Hungarian authorities.

But it was from the East that the severest blow of all was struck. Károlyi's and Jászi's negotiations with the Roumanian leaders in Hungary had been far more difficult than with the Slovaks. There was, again, no binding agreement, but the Roumanians appear to have demanded, and Jászi to have agreed to grant, a very loose federal connection in which

¹ See an article by E. Prokopy, the former Főispán in Ujvidék, in the *Pester Lloyd*, 16th July, 1933.

Transylvania would have enjoyed something little short of complete independence.¹ On 12th October a Roumanian National Council constituted itself at Nagyvarad and decided to claim the right of self-determination. On 27th October this Council constituted itself at Arad. The Saxons constituted a similar Council within their own Sees. Károlyi's Government recognized the Roumanian Council as representing the Roumanians in Hungary, and sent a minister to Arad to negotiate with it. The Roumanians subsequently claimed that by this recognition Hungary had recognized the separation of Transylvania from Hungary. This, however, the Hungarian Government strongly denied.² On 9th November, Roumania, which had concluded a separate peace with the Central Powers in 1918, declared war again. Her operations were delayed by the presence of General Mackensen's army; but after this had been repatriated to Germany, she invaded Transylvania, moving up to the line laid down by the Belgrade agreement. On 1st December a meeting of Transylvanian Roumanians at Alba Julia declared for the union of Transylvania with Roumania, subject to safeguards for themselves and for the minorities.³

The Roumanians, like the Serbs, took immediate steps to render their possession permanent; but they were even less easy to satisfy. In mid-December, alleging unrest whereby the lives and properties of Roumanians west of the line of demarcation were

¹ Károlyi, *op. cit.*, p. 391, says that the Roumanians demanded "an extraordinarily far-reaching form of autonomy for the Roumanian people, or for Transylvania, a form of autonomy which would have been connected with the mother country much more loosely than we wished". He describes this as the Roumanians' "maximum demand", but Jászi, *op. cit.*, p. 62, speaks of having offered "independence and autonomy for Transylvania, on the basis of equal and democratic federation of the 'three nations'" (Magyars, Roumanians, and Saxons of Transylvania?).

² *Documents*, pp. 63-8.

³ The Saxons adhered to this resolution on 21st January, 1919.

endangered, they crossed that line in several places, and finally obtained from Paris permission to occupy a line running well out beyond the mountains, in the great Hungarian plain (Szatmár-Nemeti—Nagykároly — Nagyvárad — Békescsaba). The French (representing the Allies) replied to all protests by forcing the Hungarian troops to retire in favour of the Roumanians. Only the Banat was occupied by French troops, to avoid conflict between the Roumanians and Serbs. In the Roumanian zone the officials were forced, under threat of dismissal, to take the oath to the King of Roumania. "Incidents" constantly occurred between the troops of the two nations, and finally Colonel Vyx handed Károlyi a Note, on 20th March, establishing a neutral zone between them. The zone comprised some 2,000 square miles of Hungarian territory, and included the third town of Hungary, Debreczen, while the second, Szeged, was occupied by French troops.

The Note¹ states that the administration in the zone was to be left in the hands of the Hungarian authorities, under the control of the Inter-Allied Command. Károlyi apparently understood that the new line was to constitute the definitive frontier. In any case, his cup was full. In the question of the frontiers, one blow had followed another. In internal affairs he had satisfied no one. In particular, a Hungarian Jew named Bela Kun had returned from Russia, where he had been prisoner of war, as Lenin's emissary, harbinger of the coming Bolshevik revolution. He had founded a paper which had become the rallying point of all the extremists discontented with Károlyi's policy. In a rare moment of decision, Károlyi had him imprisoned, but his propaganda went on. Now, in

¹ *Documents*, pp. 117-19.

the darkest hour, when all appeals elsewhere had failed, the Communists proclaimed that if Hungary would turn Communist herself, Russia would march immediately to her aid. In a last, faint hope of getting help from this unexpected quarter, Károlyi determined, on the evening of 20th March, to form a purely Social Democrat Government. On the following day, however, the Social Democrats had, without informing their bourgeois colleagues, brought about a fusion with the Communists. By 7 p.m. the power was already wholly in the hands of the new bloc, and Károlyi, informed of this, resigned the power "into the hands of the proletariat". Kun was released from prison, and formed a cabinet in which he was himself Commissary for Foreign Affairs and *spiritus rector*.

As defender of his country Kun acted with spirit. When he took over, Hungary was practically without an army, and what she had was trying to work on a futile system of parliamentarism. The Allies, who dreaded above all things to see Bolshevism take firm root in Central Europe, toyed with the idea of suppressing it with Roumanian help. An attempt to re-establish a neutral zone having failed, the Roumanians were allowed to advance; and they reached the line of the Tisza on 1st May. The Supreme Council forced them to halt on this line; and the Hungarians hurriedly reorganized their army, enrolled officers and men of the old forces, introduced iron discipline, and in June drove the Czech forces clean out of Eastern Slovakia, where they proclaimed a Soviet Republic. The Allies, however, forced them to withdraw, at the same time stating that a line closely corresponding to the demarcation lines in the north and west would be Hungary's permanent frontiers with Czechoslovakia and Roumania respectively.

Kun's domestic policy had been less fortunate. Few things have inflicted so much damage on Hungary; not so much through the actual havoc wrought at the time, which was not very great, as on account of the heritage of hatred which it left behind. The Communist leaders included a few idealists, some foolish and some very wicked men. The last named perpetrated many excesses, including the murder of (according to official figures) 585 persons. In doing so they brought into disrepute not only the Jewish race (for nearly all their leaders were Jews) but also the whole working class and even all the Liberal movement in Hungary. It has been easy ever since to brand as Communism any movement at all inconvenient to the existing social order. Thus forces even of moderate reform have been driven underground, to the lasting detriment of the nation.

As time went on, the regime grew increasingly unpopular, even among the organized workers, while the country districts were practically solid against Budapest. On 17th July the Allies actually demanded that the Communist Government should resign, whereupon, in an effort to restore his popularity, Kun undertook, on 20th July, an offensive against the Roumanians. The Hungarian troops were heavily defeated; the Government resigned on 1st August, and three days later the Roumanian troops entered Budapest.

Meanwhile a counter-revolutionary government had constituted itself, first in Arad, which was under Roumanian occupation, and later in Szeged, which was held by the French. A "detachment" was stationed in Vienna, to keep in touch with foreign opinion. After the fall of the Communist regime, the "national forces" which had gathered round this group moved into West Hungary, while in

Budapest the Socialist government which had taken charge was overthrown by another under the Archduke Joseph. The Allies forced the Archduke to retire, and after prolonged negotiations, arranged for the formation of a concentration cabinet, and persuaded the Roumanians (who had been looting Budapest with great thoroughness) to retire. On 14th November, the Roumanians withdrew, and the national forces, their commander-in-chief, Admiral Horthy, at their head, entered Budapest.

IX

There followed a reaction in the most exact sense of the term. The word is usually associated with excesses, which were not lacking. In West Hungary in particular, detachments under regular officers or adventurers took barbarous revenge, not only upon criminals who had perpetrated terrorist acts during the preceding months, but also on persons whose purely political activities had been menacing to the social order. The Jews suffered especially heavily. It was long before the outrages stopped, and they left behind them a heritage of social bitterness which has been a grave misfortune for Hungary.

But the violence was only an incidental accompaniment of the really important thing that was being accomplished, which was the restoration of the old political and social regime in its entirety, so far as this could be accomplished. It is the completeness, and the purposeful character of the restoration which may earn for it the name of "reaction" in its truest sense, and which distinguish the post-war history of Hungary so clearly from that of almost all other countries. Some European States passed through revolutions, the

results of which proved permanent. In others revolutions were followed by counter-revolutions which blended new ideas and methods with the old. Some were able to escape revolution altogether, but only at the price of rapid evolution. In Hungary the Allies made painstaking arrangements for a broad coalition Government to take office and hold elections on a basis of a liberal franchise and secret ballot. This was actually done, the elections being held (in January, 1920) under the law worked out by Károlyi's Government; but it was applied with such severity that the Social Democrats abstained from voting altogether, and the first act of the new Government was to pass "Law I of 1920" which simply annulled all measures taken by either of the two revolutionary Governments of Károlyi and Kun.

The restoration was, of course, far from complete in reality. It was a grievously diminished Hungary in which it was applied, for in June, 1920, Hungary was forced to sign the Treaty of Trianon, which reduced her area to about one-third, her population to less than one-half of the previous totals. Another essential difference consisted in the absence of the King. Charles IV, the last crowned King of Hungary, had taken refuge in Switzerland. In his absence, the Parliament of 1920 elected Admiral Horthy Regent. Charles made two attempts to return to Hungary. On 27th March, 1921, he journeyed secretly to Vienna, whence he motored to Szombathely. Hence he drove to Budapest, appeared suddenly before the Regent, and called upon him to deliver up the power to him. In view of the international situation (since both the Entente and Hungary's neighbours protested strongly against the King's presence in Hungary), Horthy persuaded him to return to Szombathely, whence he was induced

to go back to Switzerland. In October of the same year he made a second attempt, this time landing from the air near Sopron, gathering a small force, and marching on Budapest. He was opposed, on this occasion, by force, and taken out of Hungary under a British escort. The Hungarian Parliament, under strong pressure, passed a law abrogating his sovereign rights, and the unhappy king died not long after in Madeira. The question remained thereafter more or less in abeyance.

In other respects also, certain modifications were introduced. The Small Holders' Party, which in the 1920 elections gained 49 seats to the 77 of the Christian bloc which formed the Government, was for a time a power in the land, and was able to force through a measure of agrarian reform. But Count Bethlen, who became Minister-President in April, 1921,¹ succeeded in fusing the Small Holders' Party with the Christian bloc into a "Party of Unity" which then took charge. The elements of the left were gradually eliminated from this party, which became more and more the organ of the old "nation". A new franchise, based on that which had been planned during the War, and providing for secret ballot in the towns, while restoring the open vote in the rural districts, was introduced for the 1922 elections, and made it possible for the industrial workers and some liberal bourgeois elements to send a small opposition to Parliament, while a provisional reorganization of the House of Magnates made it somewhat more representative of the different social classes. Essentially, however, the old system was restored; and most of the opposition represented points of

¹ M. Huszár, Minister-President of the Coalition Government formed under Allied auspices, resigned in March, 1920; M. Simonyi-Semadam, his successor, in July, 1920; Count Pál Teleki, in March, 1921.

view which differed from that of the Government only on purely political questions, being either active legitimists, or remnants of the old "1848" party.

Count Bethlen, who held office uninterruptedly until 1931, resigned only in consequence of certain financial difficulties in which Hungary had become involved. His successor, Count Gyula Károlyi, lasted only a year. He was then followed by General Gömbös, a typical representative of the smaller "gentry", whose policy seemed to differ in many respects from that of the Counts who had preceded him, but remained a policy of the "nation". But to appreciate at once the differences and the resemblances, it will be necessary to describe in greater detail the various factors which compose Hungarian Society to-day. The description will afford an opportunity for showing more fully what are the problems which confront Hungary to-day, and what the efforts which she is making to face them.

THE CONSTITUTION

Unlike almost every other country in the world, except England, Hungary has never officially codified her constitutional laws in a single document. There exist, indeed, certain compilations, the most famous of which is Verböczy's "Tripartitum" of 1514; but this, although it received the Royal approval, and has served ever since for a mine in which statesmen and jurists have rummaged for argument and precedent, never received the sanction of law. Thus, while there is no country which appeals so constantly, or with such pride, to its Constitution as Hungary, there are also few whose constitution is so difficult to define briefly. It is an agglutination of laws, privileges, and concessions, which has grown up round a very ancient core as a result of bargainings, concessions, and occasionally unilateral acts on the part of the monarch or the nation. The origins reach back to the semi-legendary blood-pact of the steppe; the written compacts which the king must, even to-day, swear to observe begin with the Golden Bull of 1222, and continue through a long series of fundamental laws, the most important of which are those of 1608, 1790, and 1848-1867.

The marvel is that the later instruments have done so little to modify the original character of this charter, the most striking feature of which has been the gradual and organic nature of its development. This has been at once its chief strength and its greatest weakness. On the one hand, there have been few of those high-sounding but meaningless foreign importations, so dear to the constitution-makers of many inexperienced countries (especially

among the Latins). On the other hand, the venerable oak of the Hungarian constitution has been slow of growth and reluctant to bend when conditions round it have changed ; so that although immensely solid, it is apt to be chronically out of date.

The most violent changes of modern times—and for that matter, of all Hungarian history—were those introduced in 1918–19 by the Republican Governments of Károlyi and Bela Kun. Law I of 1920, however, “on the re-establishment of the Constitution and on the provisional organization of the supreme power,” simply cancelled all Acts passed by the two revolutionary Governments and restored the *status quo*. At the same time, however, the Treaty of Trianon and the position in relation to the Habsburg Dynasty necessitated certain modifications, which are described as provisional. A few changes have been made since, the most important being the reorganization of the Upper House in 1926, while another very important alteration—the general introduction of secret suffrage—has been promised for the near future.

Although there is to-day no crowned king of Hungary, Hungary is, constitutionally, a limited monarchy. This banal phrase does not, however, do justice to the peculiar character of her chief institution—the unique relationship between the king and the nation, expressed in the doctrine of the Holy Crown.

This doctrine, which was first clearly formulated by Verböczy (although traces of it are to be found earlier), offers an ingenious solution to the never-ending problem of whether the king, by grace of God, or the nation, by virtue of its ancient liberty, constitutes the true source of power. It is also a tribute to the extraordinary reverence with which the Magyars naturally regarded the crown sent to

St. Stephen by the Pope Sylvester II in A.D. 1000¹; for St. Stephen's coronation constituted, as it were, a charter for the whole Hungarian nation, consecrating their national independence and admitting them into the family of civilized peoples.

The Holy Crown, in Hungarian theory, is a moral personality, standing above either king or nation and embracing them both. In it they are united, the one as head, the other as the "members". With the Crown, the nation confers rule over itself upon the king, while the crowned king alone can confer nobility (i.e. political rights) upon the members of the nation. "Thus," says Verböczy,² "the origin of nobility depends upon him (the King) by a certain reciprocal transference and reflexible connection, being mutually dependent in such fashion that they cannot be severed nor separated, and the one cannot exist without the other."

Each noble was in the old days a "member of the Sacred Crown"; so was each Royal Free City, as a legal fiction, although its individual citizens were not. With the abolition of feudal restrictions and the extension of full rights of citizenship throughout Hungary, the importance of this doctrine has been lost, but the special position of the Crown remains.

Its chief importance lies in its limitation of the rights of the king. The territory of the State is not that of the king, but of the Crown. All rights

¹ Actually, the crown consists of two parts. The upper part, which has no inscription and consists of enamel portraits of the Apostles (eight of which are extant) is probably of South Italian workmanship, and is most likely the actual crown sent to Stephen by the Pope. The lower hoop is of Byzantine workmanship, and bears the portraits of the Greek Emperor, Michael Dukas and his son Romanus, as also of the Hungarian King Géza I. It was almost certainly a gift from Michael to Géza. The date of the golden cross which surmounts the whole is unknown; its crooked position is apparently due to faulty workmanship.

² *Tripartitum*, i, 4.

of property proceed from the Crown, and all vacant possessions revert to it. The property and rights of the State are vested in the Crown.

The king cannot therefore legitimately detach any part of the territories of the Holy Crown to incorporate it, for example, in any other part of his dominions. This provision, although frequently violated, yet provided a valuable safeguard for Hungary in the days when her Habsburg rulers were also lords of so many other territories.¹ In his coronation oath the king swears "neither to alienate nor diminish the frontiers of Hungary and its accessory lands and whatever belongs to those lands, under any title whatsoever, but rather to increase and extend them so far as he can, and to do everything that he can in justice do for the common welfare, the fame and increase of these his lands".

The king does not enter into his full sovereign rights until after his coronation with the Holy Crown. Charles Robert, for example, was actually crowned three times with other crowns (the Holy Crown being at the time in the possession of the Voivode of Transylvania), but was not considered *legitime coronatus* until a fourth ceremony had been

¹ The "Lands of the Holy Crown" consisted in 1918 of Hungary proper, with Transylvania; Croatia and Slavonia (entitled *regna sociata*); and the *corpus separatum* of Fiume. The King of Hungary still bore the title of King of Bosnia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Cumania, Galicia, and Lodomeria, but Hungary had, apparently, renounced her claims over Serbia, Bulgaria, and Cumania (the Moldavia of to-day), which were parts of foreign States whose independence Hungary had recognized. Under the terms of his oath, the King-Emperor would, technically, have been obliged to reunite Galicia, Lodomeria, and Dalmatia with Hungary, but the question of the two former provinces was never raised. On the other hand, Hungary always formally maintained her claim to Dalmatia, as a part of the Triune kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia, and Dalmatia, although the province was *de facto* administered by Austria. The position of Bosnia after the annexation defied analysis. Under the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary formally acknowledged the frontiers of her new neighbours without, however, recognizing their moral claim to her old territories.

performed with due ritual. By pact with the Habsburgs, Hungary recognized the heir apparent as king from the moment of his predecessor's death, but until coronation he was unable to exercise certain important rights, such as that of sanctioning laws.

Before coronation the king signs an "inaugural diploma", which has been negotiated with the representatives of the nation, and is countersigned by the Minister-President. Under the later Habsburgs this diploma was always based on that signed by Charles III, in 1712, although there were a few later alterations, and the preamble varied to meet the circumstances. The regular clauses consisted of promises by the king (1) to respect, and ensure the respect by others, of the rights, constitution, independence, liberty, and territorial integrity of the Lands of the Holy Crown and of all liberties, privileges, recognized usages and laws sanctioned by previous kings or to be in the future legally enacted by Parliament and sanctioned by the king, excepting only that clause of the Golden Bull which allowed the *jus resistendi*; (2) to keep the Holy Crown under due guard in Hungary¹; (3) to reunite with Hungary all parts and provinces thereof recovered or to be recovered; further, of a recognition that if the persons entitled to succession under the Pragmatic Sanction died out, the nation would recover its right to elect its monarch; and fifthly, of a promise that the heirs and successors would take the same oath.

¹ Some sovereigns have removed the crown in the past, but the nation has always attached the greatest importance to its recovery and safe keeping. It is now kept in Buda and guarded, with the other insignia, by a special armed corps of "Crown Guards", under two Keepers, who are elected from time to time by the National Assembly from a list submitted by the king. The Keepers must both be laymen, and by usage one is a Catholic, the other a Protestant. They are usually drawn from the higher aristocracy.

After signing the diploma, the king receives coronation at the hands of the Archbishop of Hungary, who in setting the crown on his head is assisted by a lay dignitary. After coronation he takes a public oath which repeats in shorter form the terms of the diploma, containing in particular the three promises to respect and maintain the constitution, the territorial integrity, and the independence of Hungary. This he confirms by pointing a sword, traditionally known as that of Attila, to the four corners of heaven.

Thus, once the coronation oath has been taken, the king is debarred from reducing any of the nation's existing constitutional rights or liberties. A conscientious claimant to the throne, if he desires to obtain additional prerogatives, can therefore only do so in the interval before coronation, by inducing the nation to accept a modified diploma and oath. This has been done occasionally (just as, when circumstances have been reversed, the nation has extorted further concessions from the king); while some of the Habsburgs resorted to the expedient of postponing coronation. Joseph II, known to posterity as the "*kalapos király*" or "*hatted king*", was never crowned at all; Francis Joseph postponed his coronation for twenty years—the whole period of his absolutist experiments; and it was an open secret that the murdered Archduke Francis Ferdinand had thoughts of postponing coronation until he had imposed drastic changes on Hungary. To guard against this, a law provides that the king must be crowned within six months of succession.

Once crowned, the king is limited by the terms of his oath, but retains considerable powers. He has the right of initiative in legislation, and also the right to sanction, or to refuse to sanction

legislation which has passed through Parliament. He has the sole right to convoke, prorogue, or dissolve Parliament (limited under the law of 1867 by the obligation to allow Parliament an opportunity to discuss and vote the budget). He nominates certain members of the Upper House. In administration, he nominates the Ministers, Lords-Lieutenants, higher civil servants, and University Professors. He also enjoys certain particular historic rights in his capacity as Apostolic King. These are described elsewhere.¹

The throne of Hungary is vacant to-day owing to events already described. The Regent exercises *de facto* most of the royal rights and prerogatives. He is, provisionally, the supreme head of the executive and of the judicature, and represents the nation in its international relations. He cannot, however, bestow titles of nobility, nor exercise any of the peculiar powers enjoyed by the king in his "apostolic" capacity, nor has he the king's legislative powers. If Acts duly passed by Parliament meet with his approval, he orders their promulgation; otherwise, he may return them to Parliament for reconsideration, but cannot refuse sanction, as he cannot grant it. The Ministry is responsible not to the Regent, but to Parliament.

In the absence of a king, all legislative, and even all administrative measures taken by the nation are in theory purely provisional. For by virtue of the mystical synthesis proclaimed by the doctrine of the Holy Crown, the nation without the king is as incomplete as the king would be without the nation. Hungary remains a monarchy, and all steps taken by the nation in the absence of the king will require confirmation from the next monarch on whose brow the Holy Crown is placed.

Meanwhile, the nation exercises its legislative

¹ See p. 143.

authority through Parliament, which consists of two Houses. The Upper House is the successor of the old "Magnates' Table", but its membership was slightly reformed in 1926 to give it a more representative character. Its members obtain their membership through four channels. These consist : (a) of all members of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine established on Hungarian territory, aged 24 full years and of sufficient fortune to entitle them to the suffrage ; (b) by virtue of their office, and pending tenure of it, of the royal bannerets, the two Keepers of the Crown, the supreme judiciary functionaries, the Procurer-General, the Commander-in-Chief, the Presidents of the National Bank and of the National Institute of Social Insurance, and the prelates or supreme dignitaries of the "received" religions ; (c) of thirty-eight male members of the high aristocracy, selected by their peers from among those of their number who have completed their 24th year and pay a certain minimum in direct taxation ; seventy-six members designated by the counties and the municipal cities, on a scale proportionate to the number of their electoral constituencies ; and thirty-six elected representants of the Chambers of Agriculture, Commerce, and Industry, advocates and notaries, the universities and high schools, the Heroes' Order, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, and the Stock Exchange ; and (d) a maximum of forty life-members, who may be nominated by the Chief of the State, who also nominates, every five years, one candidate proposed by each of the following bodies : the National Association of Doctors, the Association of Industrials, the Society of Agriculturalists. If any of the constituent bodies named above does not make use of its right to representation the Chief of the State may also fill the vacancy with his own nominee.

Election, where it takes place, is by secret ballot. The term of office is ten years, half of the members being elected every five years. At the same time, an equal number of substitutes is elected to fill any vacant places.

The Lower House, or Chamber of Deputies, is composed of 245 elected members. To exercise the active suffrage, a voter must have been a Hungarian citizen for at least ten years, and have resided in the same locality for ten years; have reached the age of 24 if a man, or 30 if a woman; and possess certain educational qualifications. For the passive suffrage, any elector who has reached the age of 30 is eligible.

Every candidate must first be nominated by 10 per cent of the votes of his constituency, numbering at least 1,000 in all (half this number if he is the retiring Deputy). These lists are examined by a commissioner who is a local judicial official. Against his decision there is no appeal.

The term of office is five years. Except in the case of the cities, where the method of "*scrutin de liste*" is used, the candidate obtaining the absolute majority in each constituency is elected. If no absolute majority is obtained, a second vote is taken between the two candidates at the head of the list. The ballot is open in the counties, secret in the cities, where *scrutin de liste* is employed. Every voter must go to the booths, but he need not vote where the ballot is open.

Bills may be presented by any member of either House. The Bills dealing with the budget and the closed accounts must be presented first in the Lower House. A Bill adopted by one House is submitted to the other, which must decide thereon within six months. If the two chambers disagree, attempts are made to reconcile the points of view first by

exchange of notes, afterwards by meetings between the Committees of the two Houses. If the Lower House has twice failed to secure the approval of the Upper House it may present the Bill in question direct to the Head of the State. In the case of the budget, the Upper House has only one month in which to decide, and may not modify the legislation passed by the Lower House.

In the financial crisis of 1931 a "Committee of Thirty-three" was appointed as an emergency measure. This body consists of twenty-two members of the Lower House, elected by the House, and eleven of the Upper. It may also invite outside experts to take part in its deliberations, although not to vote. It sits even during the Parliamentary recess, and also after prorogation of Parliament. Its duty is to examine and give its opinion on any measures proposed by the Government. It can also deliver an opinion, either to the Government or to Parliament, on any Government proposals, even if not laid before it.

The administration of Hungary was largely centralized during the past half-century. Many services, such as those of finance, customs and excise, national defence, etc., are now wholly centralized, and call for no special description. The system of local administration, on the other hand, is both peculiar and important.

The origins and development of the ancient institution of the County (*vármegye*) have been described elsewhere. In earlier days, particularly at the beginning of the nineteenth century, they enjoyed rights so far-reaching that observers described Hungary as consisting, not of one country, but of sixty-three (seventy-one if Croatia-Slavonia was included) independent republics. These rights have to-day been greatly curtailed, and the twenty-

five Counties¹ which remain are only shadows of their old selves. They, for instance, lost one part of their old functions altogether—that part, indeed, for which they were originally created—when the executive power was separated from the judiciary in 1879; for although justice in its lower instances is still administered by officials who are also County officials, the Counties have ceased to be autonomous judiciary bodies.

Administratively, however, they retain their old autonomy. The County is still not a mere administrative subdivision of the State, but an autonomous entity, possessing legal personality, distinct from that of the State. The participants in this personality are, since the abolition of the exclusive privileges of the nobles (to whom membership had previously been confined), all inhabitants of the County, six years' residence being necessary to acquire domicile. The members of the County exercise their own corporate rights autonomously, and conduct their own affairs by exercise of that autonomy, even when they are, in fact, only carrying out measures enacted by the central authorities.

The County sees to the local application of national measures, and also enacts and applies measures of purely local concern. In each case it acts as part of the national administration, while preserving its autonomous character. In the former, it has only to apply the national law, and thus acts simply as a lower instance of the central Government; in the latter it enacts its own by-laws, regulations, etc. It is also entitled to occupy itself with all matters of general interest, including political questions; to pass votes of confidence or non-

¹ Of the sixty-three counties of 1918, thirty were assigned in whole to various Successor States, and twenty-three in part. The resultant fragments have been provisionally amalgamated with their neighbours, leaving twenty-five units.

confidence in the Government, and to communicate its wishes to the Government by way of petition or address. The Government is not bound to act upon these, but the size and importance of some of the Counties—the largest of them, Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun, occupies most of the territory between the Danube and the Tisza, with a population of over 1,300,000—the fact that they organize the Parliamentary Elections, and that nearly a quarter of the Upper House is composed of delegates from the Counties (who send to it a number of members varying from one to eight, according to their size), naturally lends great weight to their wishes. This has been somewhat diminished in recent years by the fact that many of them, especially those with a high percentage of rural population, are somewhat heavily indebted, and are thus largely dependent on the Government for financial assistance, and consequently amenable to its wishes.

The Government retains the ultimate control over the Counties, subject to their autonomy. They are obliged to submit their statutes and by-laws to the Government, but the latter may not refuse to sanction them unless they are contrary to the national law. If sanction is refused, the County has the right of appeal to the Supreme Constitutional Court.

The chief Government control is, however, exercised by the Lord-Lieutenant (Főispán), who is at the head of each County, but not a part of its organization, and not an administrative official, but a political nominee of the Government, appointed by the King on the proposal of the Minister of the Interior, his post being terminable at any time. His function is to control the activities of the County in the interests of the Central Government. He presides at the meetings of the County's Council

and its chief sub-committees, is entitled to examine any documents, and appoints and may suspend or dismiss junior officials. He may also suspend, pending examination, the application of measures enacted by the County which seem to him illegal or calculated to endanger State interests. In extreme cases, if the County ignores or violates lawful decisions of the Government, he can take over its administration so far as is necessary to secure execution of the measure in question.

The Government also possesses certain other safeguards against irregularity or insubordination by a County, including the right to appoint a financial controller over its budget. It is entitled to dissolve the Council of the County if it refuses to obey or carry out the law, or so conducts itself as to endanger the interests of the State. The Council may appeal against this decision ; in case of dissolution a new Council must be elected within six months.

On the other hand, the Council is entitled to refuse to apply measures enacted by a Government whose position is not constitutional under the fundamental laws of Hungary, and can refuse either to levy taxes or to supply recruits to the army so long as the budget and the contingent have not been voted in due form. These rights are of comparatively small importance to-day—the Treaty of Trianon, by abolishing compulsory military service rendered one of them purely illusory—but they have been used with great effect, even in modern times. As recently as 1905 the Counties exercised them unceremoniously and successfully against the Cabinet of General Fejérváry, who had been appointed by Francis Joseph against the will of the country. They may also appeal to the Government against decrees which seem to them objectionable, but must execute them if they are upheld.

The County exercises its functions through a Council, which is elected on the basis of one member for every 750 inhabitants; the total may not, however, be less than 150 or more than 750. Two-fifths of the Council are elected by general suffrage of all inhabitants of the County who are entered on the local registers as Parliamentary electors and have resided at least six years within the County. The passive franchise is enjoyed by all electors who are also tax-payers, and at least 30 years of age. The election is conducted by districts, on the system of *scrutin de liste*; the voting is secret. Half the members are elected every five years, the term of office being ten years. Two-fifths are elected by the highest taxpayers (taxes paid by university graduates being counted double) from a list containing three times as many voters as there are vacancies. This again is divided into three categories, each of which elects one-third of the members. Voting is compulsory. The remaining fifth is composed of the chief County officials, the representatives of the Churches and of the Chambers of Commerce, Agriculture, etc. The Council may also elect, for life, distinguished persons up to 5 per cent of its own members.

The Council deals with "questions concerning the territory, the organization, and the budget of the County, and in general, all questions in which the attitude or the guiding wish of the County must be expressed". These include in particular, besides questions of internal organization, the enactment of statutes, by-laws, and rules of procedure; control of the budget and of the County income and property; decisions relating to the establishment and management of public institutions, undertakings, etc., representations to the Government, and the election of Members of the Upper House.

The "Small Council" consists of the highest County officials, and sixteen, twenty or twenty-four members of the Council, so elected by the main Council as to preserve the representative character. It prepares the agenda for the Council, takes minor decisions in matters of local interest, and conducts urgent business in the Council's place if the latter is dissolved. The Council has also a number of special sub-committees.

The head of the County administration is the Deputy-Lieutenant (*Alispán*), who controls the administration and the staff, and represents the County in its relations with other bodies, signs contracts, receives complaints, receives and executes, or passes to the Council for execution, orders from the Government, controls the budget, and acts as court of appeal against the decisions of the minor officials. He is elected by the Council for ten years.

The remaining County officials are also elected, but for life. They include the chief legal officer, the chief medical officer, the archivist, and the public trustee. They are all salaried.

The incomes of the Counties are derived (*a*) from funds, trusts, and properties, (*b*) from contributions made by the Government towards the salaries of the officials, (*c*) from local rates and taxes which are voted and collected by the Council. The Council fixes the budget, but this must be approved, and can be modified, by the Government.

The Counties are subdivided into districts (*járás*) which are not, however, autonomous corporations, but only administrative subdivisions of the County. Each of them is in charge of a Chief Magistrate (*Főszolgabíró*) who is elected by the County Council for life. He is directly subordinate to the Deputy-Lieutenant (to whom appeal usually lies against

his decisions) and is in charge of the entire administration of his district. Under him again are the magistrates and clerks, doctors and veterinary surgeons. The magistrates are elected by the Council, but appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant to the different districts; the other local officials are nominated by the Lord-Lieutenant. Each commune has its own magistrate, who is almost always a local peasant of good repute. The larger communes each possess a notary, or clerk (a County official), while several small communes share a single notary between them. The notary is, as a rule, the real head of the local administration. The village councils are purely advisory, possessing no autonomy or executive power.

The "County towns" on the other hand, of which there are forty-five in Hungary, comprising on the whole the older and more important, although not always the largest¹ aggregations of population, do not fall within the jurisdiction of the Chief Magistrate, but are directly subordinate to the County. The burgomaster occupies the same position as the Chief Magistrate, and is, like him, directly subordinate to the Deputy-Lieutenant. He is, however, elected, not by the Council, but by the town council, for a period of years. The town council is elected by its citizens.

Superior to these again are the so-called "municipal cities", eleven in number, which stand on the same footing as the Counties. Several of

¹ Considerations of ancient tradition and former importance also play a part. There are old "royal free cities", especially in Western Hungary, which still possess municipal rights, although containing only a few thousand inhabitants. On the other hand, there are in the Alföld enormous conglomerations which still bear the name of village; the largest of these, Békes-Csaba, near the present Roumanian frontier, has close on 40,000 inhabitants. The historical principles have not, however, remained quite unmodified; there are former "royal free cities" which have to-day no municipal self-government, and there are municipalities which were never free cities.

them have, indeed, a population larger than that of the smallest Counties, while the great cities of the Alföld—Debreczen, Szeged, and Kecskemét—possess municipal areas equal to that of a small County. The burgomaster stands in the same position as the Deputy-Lieutenant, and the city, like the County, is autonomous and has the same functions as the County: it initiates and carries through the administration of purely local affairs, applies locally the general Government policy, and is entitled to occupy itself with questions of national policy. Each city is under a Lord-Lieutenant, who is often identical with the Lord-Lieutenant of the County in which the city lies.

Budapest occupies a special position. Here, again, the burgomaster is the chief executive official, but over him is not a Lord-Lieutenant, but a Lord Mayor, who is elected for a period of six years by the General Council of the capital from among three candidates proposed by the Minister of the Interior. The city is divided into fourteen districts, administered by separate officials, but without autonomous character.¹

Liaison between the local organs of the central Government services, many of which, although responsible only to Budapest, are organized by Counties, is kept up by an "Administrative Committee" which is composed of the Lord-Lieutenant, the heads of the services in question, the chief County officials, and ten elected members of the Council. The heads of the Government services report monthly to this Committee, which has to arrange for the necessary liaison and co-operation between them. The Committee reports every six months both to the Minister-President and to the County.

¹ A Bill was recently introduced which will considerably limit the special autonomy of Budapest.

THE CHURCH

Pride of place among the pillars of Hungarian society belongs, both in title and in antiquity, to the Church. If its importance to-day has considerably diminished, it yet remains a spiritual and political factor of the first order which, often unseen, affects nearly all other questions. The position of the Church in Hungary is, moreover, not merely important, but also extraordinarily interesting; for the relations between Church and State are unique in Europe. In few countries has a single creed wielded such immense influence as the Catholic Church in Hungary, and in few has that essentially super-national authority been so closely identified with the national tradition. And yet there is a large party which regards it as an alien and anti-national force; and few nations have rebelled so frequently and so whole-heartedly against its authority as the Magyars.

Actually, modern Hungary has no official or established Church. In principle, any Hungarian citizen is free to practice any creed consistent with public order or morals. He may also register himself (although not his children) as following no religion. The general religious structure of the country is, however, based less on this universal freedom than on the equality in law enjoyed by a number of so-called "received" religions. "Reception" of a religion means that its followers are permitted to practice it freely and enjoy full civil and political rights, and that its internal autonomy is officially recognized. All received religions enjoy complete equality before the law.

All the main religions practised in Hungary to-day are received, but they have achieved this

status at very different dates and sometimes only after long struggles. The Roman Catholic became automatically "received" on St. Stephen's conversion to Christianity. The Uniate Churches (Greek and Armenian) followed suit on their foundation, in virtue of their membership of the Catholic Church. The Protestant confessions have been received since the seventeenth century; the Greek Orthodox since 1791; the Jewish only since 1896.

The Catholic Church has stood in a special and intimate relationship to the Hungarian Crown ever since the foundation of the Christian monarchy under St. Stephen. It has been told elsewhere how Stephen of old received both spiritual and temporal authority, by a unique concession, direct from the Pope. By this act the Holy See became the special protector of Hungary's political independence. In return, the Papacy granted the wearer of the Holy Crown rights which it would have denied to its more dreaded rival, the Emperor. Stephen himself, in virtue of his title of apostolic King, governed his Church, according to the old "Legend" of his life, in ghostly matters as in temporal. The special historical connection between the Crown and the Church was always remembered, and proved of the utmost value to the former during the religious troubles of the early Renaissance period. In other countries, where the kings took to appointing bishops and in various ways defying the power of Rome, this meant a breach with historic traditions which often, as in England, led to a final rupture. In Hungary it was regarded as a strengthening of the old tradition, and Hungary's kings, however strained their relations might at times be with the Holy See, never broke the tie altogether, for to do so would have been to throw away one of the traditional props of their own authority.

*The special position of the Crown is still expressed to-day in the title, revived by Maria Theresa and borne by her and all her successors (and recognized by Pope Clement XIII), of Apostolic King. The title, even to-day, carries with it special prerogatives which, in the hands of the Habsburgs, were no mere empty forms. The wearer of the Crown is of right supreme patron of the Catholic (including the Uniate) Church in Hungary. He appoints all bishops, abbots, and prelates (simply informing the Holy See of his choice), and has the right of supervision over all religious foundations.¹ The King of Hungary also enjoys the *jus placeti*, i.e. the right to check any misuse of Papal Bulls, to approve the oath sworn by the Hungarian bishops to the Holy See, and to forbid the publication of any Papal Bull not authorized by himself.

But if the kings kept the control of the Church in their hands, they made it a thing worth controlling. From Stephen's day onward, the lot of the Catholic Church has been an enviable one. Stephen, as a true Magyar, abhorred half-measures, and when he accepted Christianity, did so with a whole heart. He was a great and generous founder of bishoprics and monasteries (that of Pannonhalma is particularly connected with his name), which he endowed amply with lands. Thus the Catholic Church gained a position which—owing to the fact mentioned above, that there has never been an open split between Crown and Church in Hungary (or not one of such duration that the *status quo ante* could not be restored after it), and never a successful social revolution—it has never lost.

The only important exception was the expulsion

¹ This includes the right to appoint the bishops of fifteen "rotten dioceses" in the Balkans, the incumbents of which, since they had no sheep of their own to feed, were regularly employed *in partibus*.

of the Jesuits under Maria Theresa,¹ who also diminished the numbers of the other monastic orders which, however, she still left exceedingly numerous.² For the rest, the boundaries of many of the Church estates remain to-day unaltered since the original grants by St. Stephen and his early successors. All Hungary's land reforms, whether carried through by Austrian, Hungarian, or Jew, left them equally intact. In the pre-War kingdom they covered about 2,200,000 yokes; one bishopric alone owned 60,000 yokes, and they were almost equally well endowed. Even in diminished Trianon Hungary, the Catholic Church owns about 800,000 yokes—a considerable fraction of the total area of Hungary, and one which includes some of its fattest acres.

These estates provided the Church with enormous revenues, and the incomes enjoyed by the richer sees and monastic foundations, from their property alone, were vast; in addition to which, and to many donations from pious kings and private persons, the Church for centuries received the tithe from *all* estates.

This great wealth alone would have given the Catholic Church immense political influence, but it also enjoyed, of right, a legal position of extraordinary power. Stephen placed among the pillars of his society first the Catholic faith, second the Church, and thirdly, the "estate of priests" whom he enjoined upon his son to regard as "his elders".³ Only after these came, as the "fourth glory of the

¹ It had already been stipulated in the Peace of Vienna (1606) that the Jesuits might not acquire real property in Hungary.

² The *Catholic Almanac* for 1929 enumerates no less than eighteen monastic orders in Hungary, some of them exceedingly widespread. The Minorite Friars, for example, have thirty-three monasteries, the Jesuits eight. All the great orders are represented, and many of the more obscure. There are twenty-two orders of nuns.

³ *S. Stephani Regis de morum institutione*, capp. 1-3.

realm", the lay dignitaries. The Church always retained this titular role of the first Estate in Hungary. All priests and monks were, of course, free men from the first. When the hierarchy of dignities within the realm took shape, the Church was well to the fore. All archbishops, bishops, and abbots were members of the House of Magnates, while the Chapters and religious orders sent their representatives to the Lower House. All other priests, with some monastic orders, were in full possession of all other noble privileges. Prelates sat as assessors and co-judges in the two highest judicial Courts of the land, the "Septemvirate" and the King's Bench; the Archbishop of Esztergom, as Primate of Hungary, was even empowered to appoint two lay judges to the Septemvirate, while he himself sat as judge on the King's Bench.¹ Two archbishops were, in addition, supreme Főispáns of the Counties in which they resided. After the reorganization of the latter nineteenth century, all diocesan bishops remained *ex officio* members of the House of Magnates.

But the influence which the Church exercised through these constitutional prerogatives was only a part of what it enjoyed in practice. Except for the single brief period of the Reformation, both the Crown and the magnates were so closely identified with it that the spiritual and the lay authorities were little more than two aspects of a single institution. As the clergy exercised vast temporal power, so the great families in whose hands rested the civic administration of Hungary sent their younger sons and poorer members to fill the leading

¹ The Archbishop enjoys other very extensive rights which make his position almost equivalent to that of the patriarchs of the pre-Gregorian Churches. He can convoke national synods, hear appeals from all Consistories (with two exceptions), and supervise all dioceses and monasteries, the Arch-abbey of Pannonhalma alone excepted.

positions in the Catholic hierarchy. The great house of Esterházy, whose fortunes are sketched in the next chapter, affords an excellent example of this intimate interconnection; of Prince Pál I's six sons and four daughters, two sons became abbots, and three daughters took the veil. Or more revealing far than any list of names is a visit to the Chapter-house of Esztergom, with its gallery of Archbishops, bishops, and canons, in which every other face is that of one of Hungary's great historic families.

Compared with the Catholic Church, the Protestant has had an arduous struggle, against great odds. Only once, at the Reformation, the new doctrines swept all before them. Practically the whole country became Protestant. The Catholic Church was reduced almost to its own hierarchy, and for one brief moment the King himself (Maximilian II) seemed to hesitate. But the Counter-Reformation brought a complete transformation. In Transylvania alone the Constitution, which had proclaimed the complete equality of the four received religions (Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, Unitarian) guaranteed the continuance of some sort of toleration. Elsewhere, the reconversion was carried out by fire and sword. Northern and Western Hungary became once again almost entirely Catholic. Beyond the Tisza, the Calvinists, thanks to their obstinate courage and the protection of foreign Powers, managed to resist extermination, and the Treaties of Vienna (1606) and Linz (1645) even guaranteed them religious liberty. Subsequent enactments, however, made this liberty little more than nominal. A Royal decree of 1731 excluded them from public office, and imposed severe restrictions on their schools. They were debarred from all political influence and were fortunate if they could even practice their religion in private without molestation.

It was not until the very end of the eighteenth century that true tolerance and liberty were re-introduced,¹ and complete equality was established only under the "March Laws".

The Protestant Church was hampered, in addition, by its own disunion, since about two-thirds of its members were Calvinists, and one-third Lutherans.² But the membership of all the Protestant Churches together amounted only to some 40 per cent of that of the Catholics. They did not enjoy the backing of the Crown (except very sporadically), nor of the magnates. They had none of the vast estates or endowments possessed by the Catholics, nor the assistance of great and wealthy monastic orders to help spread their doctrines. They held few of the great *ex officio* political posts and even up to 1914, while all Catholic and Uniate bishops sat in the House of Magnates, the Protestants only had three representatives from each of the two main confessions, with a single Unitarian representative (either the bishop or the chief lay dignitary).

Yet it would be quite wrong to think of Hungarian Protestantism as a minor or unimportant branch of the national life, or even as occupying a position similar to that of Roman Catholicism in England to-day. Protestantism is in its way as deeply connected with the national life as Catholicism, and claims equally to represent the national spirit. At one time, indeed, the Hungarian Protestants described their tenets as the "Hungarian religion",

¹ The real reform was due to Joseph II's famous Edict of Toleration of 1782. The Estates afterwards declared all Joseph's enactments to have been unconstitutional, but the new law agreed in 1791 between his successor, Leopold II, and the Estates differed little from Joseph's, except that it was confined to Hungary proper. In Croatia, Catholics continued to enjoy the sole right of possessing real property or holding office.

² There were also a small number of Unitarians, chiefly among the Székely of Transylvania.

and although they deeply annoyed the Catholics by doing so, they were, in their way, justified. The case is probably unique, of two religions in a country each able to claim with so much truth the title of "national", and it can only be explained by Hungary's peculiar history.

For the story of Hungary has always consisted of the struggle between East and West; a battle fought out, not merely against foreign enemies—the German on one side, the Turk on the other—but within the nation itself, one party represents the Western and Westernizing influences of Europe, the other the Asiatic element. Which of them is more genuinely Hungarian it is difficult to say; for if the foreign influences are far more apparent, except perhaps to the trained ethnologist, in the West, where traces of Slav and German are to be met at every turn, yet the Alföld, which passes to-day, both in its own estimate and in that of others, as the most purely Magyar district, has in its day received very large numbers of immigrants of Turki stock—Petchenegs, Cumans, Jazyges, Osmanli Turks—who, while non-European, were also non-Magyar.

These elements, however, amalgamated with the Magyar stock more easily than the Western nationalities, and having less native culture of their own, adopted the Magyar more completely. Thus the Alföld has always been the centre of the Magyar-feeling part of the nation—of that part which neither likes nor trusts Western culture and Western institutions, among which it reckons Catholicism.

It has been said that the Magyars "were Protestant before they became Catholic", and this doctrinal paradox contains much political truth. The many revolts of paganism which Stephen and his successors had to put down were nearly all

centred in Eastern Hungary, and nearly all sprang from the same national reaction against foreign, European ways. Centuries afterwards, when the Habsburgs and the magnates forced the Counter-Reformation back upon Hungary, the resistance came again from the east, and its leaders were the same class of small nobles whose ancestors had formed Arpád's immigrant hordes of free warriors—fiercely independent men to whom the whole system of feudalism seemed an infringement of their ancient rights. And as the Habsburgs did, in fact, represent an anti-national force, so the Protestants of the Tisza were defending, with their religion, their national constitution and existence itself.

From the seventeenth century onward, too, the Calvinists, in particular, could claim to be championing the national cause in the narrower sense of the word. For while the Magyars of the West had again become Catholics, so also were a large number of the "nationalities": a great majority of the Slovaks, whose territory had felt the full force of the Counter-Reformation, nearly all the immigrant Swabians, the Croats and Slovenes fanatically so. Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century and even to-day, the Catholic Church has been a favourite resort for the more intelligent youth of the nationalities, especially the Germans and Slovaks, while the true Magyars have preferred to enter the army or the administrative services.¹

¹ The *Catholic Almanac* for 1929 is revealing on this point. The Primate of Hungary, Cardinal Seredi, is a Slovak who began life as Sapouček. Of the seven bishops in his diocese, three bear German names (Fetser, Hanauer, Rott). The Bishop of Chanad is named Glattfelder. Of the seven "Vicars" of sees now situated in the successor States, three are named respectively Payer, Lindemberger, and Pájer. The abbot of the Cistercian order is called Werner, etc. The proportion for the female sex is equally high; for example, the Mother Superior of the Redemptorist Nuns in Sopron is Maria Maurer; her assistants are M. S. Steinmayr, M. R. Vatzka, M. C. Puskaritz, M. A. Pinter; the Superintendent, M. R. Velansits.

Most of the Ruthenes and Roumanians of Transylvania had compromised with Catholicism by adopting the Uniate System. The Serbs and the rest of the Roumanians were Orthodox. The Lutherans were strongest among the Transylvanian Saxons and in the old, originally German mining town of Szepes. The Calvinists, whose stronghold was the Alföld and their centre the city of Debreczen, were almost entirely Magyar.

It was this consciousness of their national mission that made the Hungarian Protestants fight so tenaciously for their liberty, and it was the support given to them, on national grounds, that brought about the curious situation that in spite of the unique power and wealth of the Catholic Church, it is not the official, established Church of Hungary to-day, and stands in almost all respects on a footing of legal equality with all other denominations. Almost its only prerogative, as regards the State, is that the King must be a Catholic, and this is not a law of the State, but a Habsburg family law which would not necessarily apply if another dynasty came to wear the Holy Crown. While the Catholic Church enjoys a far larger share of the official dignities, yet in certain crucial respects the balance is held evenly between the two great confessions. Thus of the two keepers of the Holy Crown, one is a Catholic, the other a Protestant; and by tradition and custom, the Minister for Education has regularly been a Catholic, and his Secretary of State a Protestant.

One result of this combination of a very powerful majority Church with a very active minority was that all Churches alike obtained very extensive autonomy. It was only in relation to the Crown that the Catholic Church was subject to special control, and then it was no more than a change of masters,

the Crown exercising powers which are usually vested in the Holy See. As against the ordinary lay authorities, the Catholic Church has always enjoyed very great independence.

So long, however, as the Catholic Church remained the true and only religion of State, it was not necessary for this independence to be set forth in statutes or charters. The Protestants, on the other hand, needed every possible safeguard for their hard-won liberties. Accordingly, in the early seventeenth century they secured recognition for statutes of autonomy, which are drawn up on extremely democratic lines. The basis is the parish, which elects a Council of Elders, to which the priest and the teacher belong. These in turn elect higher Councils, culminating in a General Conventicle and a National Synod. The decisions of the Synods require to be confirmed by the King, but cannot be altered or rejected by him. The bishops are elected by the Churches themselves, the King having no voice in the election.¹

The non-Magyar religions profited by this precedent, particularly as the Crown found it politically advisable to support them. The Orthodox Church, which consisted of two Metropolitan Sees, the Serbian in Karlocza, the Roumanian in Nagy Szeben, was able to secure a statute of autonomy, *vis-à-vis* the lay authorities, little inferior to that of the Protestant Churches. Only the Crown enjoyed a more extensive control, since the National Congresses, partly lay, partly ecclesiastical, which were the supreme administrative bodies of their respective Churches, could not be convoked without

¹ The appointment of the Lutheran bishop of Transylvania required confirmation by the King, since the Lutheran creed had been a religion of State in Transylvania. The Unitarian bishop had to take an oath of loyalty to the Crown.

Royal consent, and could be prorogued or dissolved by the King. A Royal Commissioner presided over their sessions, and their decisions were only valid if confirmed by the King. Even the Jews enjoyed considerable autonomy, although they were weakened by their own division.¹

The Catholics naturally began to look upon the question of autonomy with greater interest when the other Confessions received these rights, and when it became less certain that the Crown would always and unreservedly support them. The question has, however, never been definitely regulated, some arguing that the Church would lose more than it gained by an exact delimitation of its functions.

The field in which the wide freedom from State control, enjoyed by all creeds alike, has in recent decades been of most importance is that of education, which was for long exclusively denominational, and still is largely so to-day. In this respect the Catholic Church, as befitted its antiquity and its resources, led the way. Both the great teaching orders, and the episcopal sees have always devoted a large fraction of their revenues to education. The Benedictines, Cistercians, Piarists, Jesuits, and other orders have done splendid work, especially for higher male education. Many of the episcopal sees still maintain a very large number of elementary schools, and many of the orders of nuns, as the Redemptorists, the Sisters of Charity, and others, have done no less for girls' education.

The Protestants started later, and have had to work with smaller resources. Some of their colleges, however, as for instance the famous seminary of

¹ Besides not becoming "received" until 1896, the Jewish religion was in other respects less favoured than other creeds in Hungary. The Chief Rabbi had no *ex officio* seat in the House of Magnates, but sat there as a nominee of the Crown.

Sárospatak, are among the most ancient and most justly famous establishments in Hungary.

The principle of denominational education was not questioned until the eighteenth century, when the Crown claimed a right of general supervision, in virtue of its apostolic character and position as head of the State. In 1777 Maria Theresa promulgated a plan, known as the *ratio educationis*, for the reorganization of the entire educational system, including elementary schools. The funds required by the State were to be supplied by the confiscated property of the Jesuits. The Protestants, however, resisted the application of the *ratio* to their own schools, on the ground that it infringed their autonomy. What happened was simply that the schools, even in the Catholic districts, remained exclusively confessional, subject to a certain control by the State. This control was only very gradually extended. In 1848 the University of Budapest was placed directly under the Minister of Education, although remaining autonomous in its internal administration. In 1868, when universal primary education was introduced, the principle was laid down that any duly qualified private person, approved association, commune, or denomination, was free to found a school. The State had a right of supervision to see that the provisions of the law were observed and the funds properly applied, and if this was not done, might take over the school. Otherwise State schools were in general only founded where the parishes or denominations could not or would not found their own schools. A commune in which no confessional school existed was bound to found a non-denominational school, the State contributing towards its upkeep where necessary. Under Hungary's nationality legislation, the private and confessional schools were free to choose their

own language of instruction, but under later laws provision was made for the compulsory teaching of Magyar.

Secondary education was regulated by a Law of 1883, supplemented by further legislation in 1924. The liberty allowed under these laws is, again, very wide. A person or institution wishing to open a secondary school must give previous notice to the Minister of Education, but consent cannot be refused if the statutes and conditions conform to the legal requirements.

The question of religious, and particularly scholastic autonomy was exceedingly important in old Hungary, in view of the nationality question. One of the chief grievances of the nationalities was that their autonomy was infringed, especially with regard to the language of instruction, and that various devices were employed to prevent them from founding denominational schools, in default of which the State stepped in and founded State schools which were, it was alleged, mere instruments of Magyarization. On the other hand, the nationalities undoubtedly found in their churches the most effective defences of their national feeling and institutions. Except in the matter of school curricula, their autonomy was, on the whole, loyally respected.

The national aspect of the religious question has, however, ceased to be important, with the severance of nearly all the non-Magyar districts from Hungary.¹ One rather curious effect was that as nearly all the State primary schools (which numbered only 3,051 out of 16,655 in all of old Hungary) were in fact situated in the non-Magyar districts, the

¹ It is interesting that Hungary maintains her policy of non-recognition of the Treaty of Trianon so consistently that the Serbian bishop in Szentendre (North of Budapest) still remains subject to the Metropolitan of Karlocca, although that city is now in Yugoslavia, and the Metropolitan is a high functionary of the Serbian national church.

dismemberment of Hungary left the educational system more completely than ever in the hands of the Churches. This should have meant a reinforcement of the religious influence ; but it was counter-vailed by the fact that all the Churches, the Catholic in particular, were greatly impoverished during the post-War period, and had to depend far more than previously on subsidies from the State.¹ Moreover, Hungary possessed for several years, in Count Klebelsberg, an extremely energetic Minister of Education, who built a large number of new elementary schools, particularly in the *tanya* districts. In 1929-30, of Hungary's 6,826 primary schools, 4,683 were still denominational, and only 1,190 belonged to the State ; and there seemed little probability that the State would attempt to take over any further denominational schools, for the simple reason that it did not wish to undertake the financial burden of their upkeep ; but the effective influence of the State over all denominational education, higher and secondary as well as primary, was much stronger than these figures would appear to show.

The Treaty of Trianon has, however, restored the centre of gravity of the Church question to where it lay before the problem of nationalities became acute, and to some extent obscured the original and fundamental conflict between the Magyar Churches. Now the two old protagonists—the Roman Catholics and the Calvinists—stand once again face to face, representing respectively the two great political principles or outlooks in life which have always divided Hungary.

In writing this, one may seem to be ignoring the spiritual forces of genuine religion which are at work,

¹ In 1932 the State already paid more than two-thirds of the salaries of teachers in denominational schools.

and have recently experienced a remarkable revival in both camps. There are both a Young Protestant and a Young Catholic movement, each of which has drawn, in its own way, fresh strength from the general dissatisfaction at Hungary's dismal economic position. Yet it is probably fair to say that the difference between them is quite as much political as doctrinal. Religious conviction in Hungary, if it is widespread, particularly among the peasants, seldom reaches such heights of devotion or of fanaticism as with the Slavs or the Germans. The true Magyars are probably not, spiritually, a very religious people, as the religious toleration for which they are justly famous seems to show—even if some of the Edicts of toleration of the past were due mainly to the simple fact that no one party was in a position to impose its will on the other.

On the other hand, the two great creeds which now practically divide Hungary between them (the Catholics number about 68 per cent of the population of Trianon Hungary, the Calvinists 20 per cent, with 5 per cent Lutherans, 5 per cent Jews, and the remainder minor religions) represent deep and even fundamental differences both in their political and in their social outlooks. The conflict between them is not acute, but it is latent, and affects almost every question. It is the old issue between the Western and the Eastern orientation of Hungary; or it might be more accurate to say, between the policy of rapprochement with Hungary's great Catholic neighbours on the West, and that of a completely independent policy which considers such a rapprochement to be more of a danger than an advantage.

The great question on which the two Churches are chiefly divided is that of the monarchy. The Catholics, as repositories of the ancient traditions

of the Holy Crown, are naturally legitimist. How far this feeling extends right through their ranks is, perhaps, doubtful, for the whole structure is so thoroughly aristocratic, the differences in income and status between the higher and lower grades of the clergy are so great, that a certain divergence in political views would not be surprising. The upper and controlling grades, however, which still retain their intimate connection with the great magnate families¹ are among the strongest and most active supporters of the legitimist order in Hungary to-day.

The Calvinists represent the ancient anti-Habsburg tradition and are nearly all "Free Electors". For various reasons, they are chary of voicing actual hostility to the present claimant (or heir) to the throne; but their opposition, if inarticulate, is very determined.

To this main political difference must be added also a divergence in social outlook, which is very marked, within the limitation that both alike are Conservative rather than revolutionary forces. The Calvinists represent a well-defined social class. Their strength lies among the "gentry" or small land-owners (now for the most part turned officials) and the large peasants. They are plain men, eschewing the wealth and pomp of Courts, and there is little aristocratic tinge in their composition; the few great families belonging to them are of the Transylvanian aristocracy, and stand a little apart from the main body. But if they do not aim high in temporal things, they have also little

¹ Even to-day, in diminished Hungary, one archbishop (Count Gyula Zichy, Archbishop of Kalocsa) and two bishops (Count János Mikes, Bishop of Szombathely, and Count Gusztav Mailáth, Bishop of Transylvania) belong to the chief families of Hungary. Bishop Mikes played a large part in the attempts to bring about a Habsburg restoration in 1921; it was to his palace that the King proceeded on his first return to Hungary.

sympathy for the truly lowly. Theirs is a narrow social basis, as there is also something narrow and morose about their austere and rugged creed.

The Catholic Church, for all its Court connections and its aristocratic sympathies, is broader in its sympathies. Its system of infinite gradations has room for the humble as well as the mighty. Indeed, in some respects, it is probably the most democratic institution in Hungary. Nowhere else is it so easy for a poor peasant's son, if he has talents, to rise to the highest places in the land ; and if its upper ranks contain a generous quota of the scions of titled families, they also contain more men of truly obscure origin than any other social sphere in Hungary, except perhaps that of finance.

Socially, too, the Catholic Church has always been active. If there is authority, there is also much charity. The present Christian Social party, which is the main clerical stronghold, is led by Counts and Barons, but it has a genuine social policy. To the outsider, even if he be a Protestant, Western Hungary cannot but leave a gracious and mellow impression which is lacking from the upright but uncompromising East.

The legal position of the two parties has altered little since the War, except to achieve a beautiful obscurity. The Protestants claim that in the absence of an Apostolic King, the Regent is entitled to exercise his special prerogatives. The Catholics consider that these are in suspense. In practice, since the Regency, the Pope has appointed the bishops. There is, it may be remarked, no Concordat in force between Hungary and the Holy See. In the present Upper House, all diocesan Catholic bishops, the Vicars-General of the three Archiepiscopal sees of Esztergom, Eger, and Kalocsa are the heads of the three great teaching Orders

of the Benedictines (Pannonhalma), Cistercians (Zirc), and Premonstrians (Zsolna) sit *ex officio*. The Protestants are represented on the same system as in the Old House of Magnates.

The Protestants are stronger in fact than in law. The absence of a king has seriously weakened the Catholics, while the Protestants have not only had the Regent, Admiral Horthy, but three out of four successive Prime Ministers: Count Teleki, Count Bethlen, both of them, like the Regent, Calvinists, and General Gömbös, a Lutheran, and it seems that, in a manner which is perhaps largely unconscious, the Protestants are gradually usurping the key positions in the State. Politically, the Catholics have suffered from disunion. The Catholic Party which existed before the War and was, for a short time after it, the largest in the State, has now dissolved, and the only pronouncedly Catholic party—the Christian Socials—is in opposition, and far smaller than the Governmental Party of Unity, besides being disunited within itself on certain important questions of domestic policy. The newly founded Actio Catholica has not yet developed as its authors hope.

More important still, perhaps, is the economic factor. The vast property owned by the Catholic Church in 1918 was almost entirely agricultural. Its investments consisted mainly of gilt-edged securities and mortgages, which became almost valueless with the depreciation of the Hungarian Crown. The land remained, but the fall in agricultural prices hit the Church as hard as it hit the lay proprietors; perhaps harder, for the Catholic estates were, by common consent, badly farmed (the Calvinists were much shrewder business men, and also suffered less by the fall in prices, since they had less to lose, and had always been

accustomed to making do on modest sums). At present most of the Catholic estates and foundations are not only largely dependent on the Government for subsidies, but are also heavily in arrears with their taxes. They are thus in no position to carry on an active policy against the Government, and if their position is nominally unimpaired, it is in reality much weaker than it appears.

THE MAGNATES

In 1582 was born in Western Hungary a certain Miklós, son of a simple country gentleman, Alispán of the County of Pozsony, who, on achieving the minor title of Freiherr had taken the name of Esterházy. Miklós married in succession two widows of mediocre family, but satisfactory possessions, thanks to whom he became owner of a large property on the Austro-Hungarian frontier. He distinguished himself by his complete loyalty to the Court of Vienna, helped to negotiate the Treaties of Nikolsburg and Linz between the Habsburgs and the Princes of Transylvania, and fought against the Turks. For his services he was created Baron, and then Count, and for twenty years held the office of Palatine, or Viceroy of Royal Hungary.

All his sons were decently provided for and, of course, by Hungarian usage, all inherited the title of Count. But while the elder sons did nothing very remarkable, the third, Pál, advanced the family fortunes a substantial step further. Pál had started life as a comparatively poor man. His first wife was his own niece, and most of their children entered the Church. But his second wife was already a member of the high aristocracy, a Countess Tököli, while his sister Juliane married Count Nádasdy, one of the most powerful men of his day. As it happened, both Nádasdy and Count Tököli were implicated in the great anti-Habsburg conspiracy of 1670, which ended with the execution of the leading conspirators and the confiscation of their property. Much of this was acquired by Pál Esterházy, who had followed his father as Palatine

and leader of the Habsburg party in Hungary. He increased his dominions to no less than 688,442 yokes, and although detested by the national party in Hungary, whose privileges he did much to curtail, he acquired from his sovereign (partly for that very reason) the title of a Prince of the Empire, with the rights of minting money, conferring nobility, and exercising power of life and death over his subjects.

One of Pál's feats was to organize a pilgrimage (the reason for which is not known) from his castle at Kis Marton to Maria Zell in Austria. Eleven thousand two hundred persons took part in this, with horses and camels, coaches and carriages. The pilgrims included, from among the Prince's own subjects: 3,860 boys in crocodile formation; 2,360 grown men; 1,050 ancients; 1,235 maidens with flowing locks; and 710 married women.

Pál's nephew, meantime, had begun by fighting for the Habsburgs against Rákoczi's troops, but changed sides, gave the Imperial Generals a great deal of trouble, and died in exile. From him was descended the French branch of the family.

Prince Pál's son did nothing in particular, but his grandson, Prince Pál II, was a Field-Marshal and Ambassador at Naples. On his death the title passed to his brother, Prince Miklós II, famous as a Maecenas, and particularly as the patron of Haydn. It was he who built the family a new château, which he called Esterhaza, on the marshy shores of Lake Fertő. He had recently paid a visit to Versailles, and is said to have built his own palace in imitation of the French building. Fortunately, his memories seem not to have been pedantically accurate, for Esterhaza, with its soft and gracious curves, is by far the more beautiful building of the two. It cost 11,000,000 gulden to erect, and was

three years in the building. Its avenues extended for three hours' journey at the end of which the distant vista showed the other family castles of Kis Marton, Forchtenstein, etc., etc. The palace itself had some 200 rooms and stabling for 200 horses. The vast park contained a Chinese pavilion and grottoes in the same mode, giant statuary and cascades, and an orangery with a marionette theatre in which Italian and German opera was performed nightly. The so-called "bagatelle" was a pavilion with a curious history. When Maria Theresa first visited the palace, she remarked rather acidly that, although the park contained 1,600 yokes, it had not one bench on which a queen could sit down when she was tired. For her next visit Esterházy put her up not a bench but a whole pavilion, costing 200,000 gulden. "For any other of my noblemen," said the gratified queen, "this would be a heavy sum to spend on politeness, but for you it is a bagatelle"; hence the name. For her visit a complete road of salt had been made, over which she could glide with no distressing jolts, and her coach was drawn through the grounds by eight men dressed as satyrs.

The private theatre held 500 spectators. Haydn—a native of the parts—conducted, and nightly performances took place, opera, German comedy, and Italian opera bouffe being played on alternate nights.

Another famous spectacle was the parade of the Esterházy regiment, a body of 146 grenadiers, forty of them over 6 feet high and none under 5 ft. 8 in. The Prince's possessions included over 100 villages and hamlets, some forty towns, and above thirty castles or palaces. The most sumptuous single item among them was the Hungarian Hussar's uniform, for man and horse, which was composed

entirely of pearls, was valued at 4,000,000 gulden, and cost 12,000 gulden in repairs each time it was worn. Count de la Garde, in his memoirs of the Congress of Vienna, was not far out when he wrote that "the pomp, the luxury and the riches of the House of Esterházy are such that the spirit can hardly conceive of them, and one is tempted, when one hears them enumerated, to dismiss the thing as a fable. How many a sovereign might be tempted to exchange his crown against the lot of such a subject !"

Napoleon tried to persuade the next Miklós, third of the dynasty, to stand as candidate for the throne of Hungary in 1805 and again in 1809 ; but Esterházy had no political ambitions, and was, besides, a loyal subject of his king. He it was of whom a lady said :

"Les Esterházy font tout au grand ; il a doté deux cents courtisanes, et pensionné cent enfants illegitimes." Among these rumour placed both Therese and Fanny Elssler, the famous dancers, and Liszt, the musician. His harem of young girls was famous ; he had them educated at great expense in Paris, Brussels, and elsewhere.

All this cost him a lot of money, and his wife, *née* Princess Liechtenstein, was obliged after his death to cultivate the friendship of Salamon Rothschild. But Miklós' capacity for spending was nothing to that of his son, Pál III, known to history by the simple name of "the spender", and husband of the famous Therèse, *née* Thurn und Taxis, the "beauté étonnante" of the Congress of Vienna, and niece of two reigning queens. As ambassador in London, Pál stocked the Embassy cellars with 120,000 bottles of Hungarian wine. When he went to Moscow for the coronation of the Czar Alexander II,

he had taken a house at a rent of 17,000 roubles for a month when he learned that the British and French Ambassadors were each paying 40,000, so tore up the lease, saying that he could not possibly pay less than his colleagues. The proprietor had the same house repainted, introduced the Prince by another door, and relet it to him at 40,000. Although he spent his life in his king's service and was a monarchist through and through, it was he who in 1848 persuaded the Archduke Ludwig to agree to the formation of an independent Hungarian monarchy—an act which ran directly contrary to the family tradition, and cost him a large annual income owing to the emancipation of the serfs. In his old age he revisited London, where he was very popular, in spite of his habit of roaring out to friends, in the loud voice for which he was famous: "I thought you were dead long ago!"

The Rothschilds saved the old gentleman from distress again and again, but by 1860, although his income was still the handsome one of a million gulden, his debts were twenty-four times that amount. He then called in a friend, Count Ferencz Zichy, who was reputed to be a financial genius. Zichy succeeded in raising him 17,000,000 gulden from Dutch and Belgium financiers, but at 7 per cent. To meet their claims the estates were farmed out "on the English system", but the farmers did better for themselves than for the Prince. At last the entail had to be broken, and many of the estates sold.

Even to-day, however, the princely estate still comprises the respectable total of 222,241 yokes in Hungary alone, with ninety-nine villages upon it; the hundredth the present Prince presented after the War to the Order of Heroes. Other estates are situated to-day in Austria and Czechoslovakia, for the new boundaries of the Treaty of Trianon were

drawn through the heart of the Esterházy country. An ancient Esterházy grenadier in uniform still guards the castle of Forchtenstein (now in Austria) though what his status is in the eyes of the Austrian Republic, or the Inter-Allied Commissions of Control, I do not know.

Nor have the Esterházys by any means disappeared from public life, even if they have produced no more figures quite so notable as the old line of Páls and Miklós. From the cadet branch of the family came that Count Esterházy known as "secretive Moritz", who had to be recalled from his post as Ambassador in Rome because he could not be induced, for months at a time, to send a single line to the Ballhausplatz. Afterwards he played a large and many say an unlucky part in the domestic politics of the Dual Monarchy. Another Count Esterházy was Hungarian Premier in 1917, and the House of Magnates, diplomatic service, and army have never been without representatives of the great house.

Yet the main glory is certainly departed. Only ghosts and caretakers inhabit Esterhaza; the serfs are serfs no longer, and civil courts composed of quite ordinary men can—and recently have—issued writs against members of the family.

This little fragment of family history shows better than many pages of generalities the character and position of that remarkable class, the Hungarian magnates. The Esterházys, as the greatest of all the modern families, are not quite a typical case; but even in size of possessions, although they were first in Hungary in their day, others before their rise had ruled over domains larger still, and there have always been families who have run them close in wealth, while at times surpassing them in influence. And much about the Esterházys is thoroughly

typical of their class : their lavish hospitality, their ostentation, their joviality, their incurable extravagance, the unhappy financial expedients to which they were all too prone ; also the manner of their rise to fame, their devotion to their King and to their Church, their occasional and unexpected lapses into Hungarian nationalism, their record of public services, their frequent intelligence.

Under the Habsburgs, the magnates had gradually come to represent the supreme Conservative party in the State, the guardians of established order. This had not always been their rôle. During the Middle Ages, on the contrary, they had been notorious even more for their truculent defiance of their sovereign lord's authority than for their lawless disregard for the rights of their weaker brethren. A thorn in the flesh of successive kings and of whole generations of freemen, they had spent their time in intriguing with foreign pretenders, fighting against each other, and making their own dominions into colourable imitations of independent principalities.

After Mohács, however, most of the magnates had supported the candidature of the Habsburgs, whose feudal ideas were far more to their liking than the native Magyar egalitarianism. For a couple of centuries, indeed, a party of irreconcilables with support from Transylvania kept up a resistance which broke out from time to time in the wars or rebellions of the Rákoczys, Tökölys, Zrinyis, and others. But Habsburg persistence gradually won the day. The opponents were killed off, or bought over by the advantages which a great Empire could offer, and which even the mightiest Hungarian lord could not despise. By their side arose new families, the Esterházys, the Festetics, the Grassalovics, the Feketes, who owed everything to the Habsburgs. The Church solemnized the

union. In 1603 only four of the great families had still remained Catholic, all the rest having adopted the teachings of the Reformation. Little over a century later, the entire aristocracy, except that of Transylvania, had reverted to the faith of which Austria was the chosen champion.

Gradually the magnates lost their national spirit. They deserted Hungary for Vienna, where they built splendid palaces, educated their sons in the Corps of Pages, married their daughters to German or Bohemian nobles, themselves acquired the manners of courtiers and forgot their native language. Incidentally, the expense of maintaining their vast and luxurious establishments in a foreign city ran them heavily into debt and made them more than ever dependent on the favours of the Crown.

The Crown did not fail them. They were loaded with honours and estates, given high posts in the army and the diplomatic service. In Hungary itself the Governmental posts were entrusted almost entirely to this half-Germanized class, so much more reliable and less rebarbative than the strange, stubborn Magyar gentlemen, with their queer costume and unintelligible language. (Vienna, however, kept a strict guard on the doings even of its own partisans, and allowed them more of the appearance of power than of its substance.) The old Hungarian National Assembly had already, quite naturally, split into two groups, the great men holding counsel apart from the small fry, although at first they voted in common in the old way. But first it became customary for the two groups to present their opinions separately, leaving the monarch to choose between them, if they differed; and after 1608 the position was regularized, all Barons and magnates, with certain ecclesiastical dignitaries, becoming members of the

Upper House, in which each had a personal vote, while the gentry and Free Cities only sent their representatives to the Lower House. In addition, the magnates secured an overwhelming influence through the tenure by their members of the chief offices of State. The highest post in Hungary, that of Palatine, was held successively in the eighteenth century by an Esterhazy, two Pálffys, and a Batthyány, and the same noble families, or their cousins—for they were all related—monopolized the positions of Ban of Croatia, Lord Chief Justice, Treasurer, Chancellor, etc., and even held nearly all the highest ecclesiastical posts. Western and North-Western Hungary seemed almost to have become the exclusive property of a few dozen families, whose palaces, in the fashionable baroque mode, adorned every third or fourth village, while their liveried retainers thronged the streets of Pozsony, the city where the coronations took place and the Diets were held, and the centre of this half-Magyar, half-Germanized life.

Their pomp and power probably reached its heyday in the eighteenth century, but if they were already beginning to wane a trifle in the nineteenth, it needed a keen eye to detect the fact. The very fact, indeed, that a class was growing up which was out of sympathy with their political ideals and rebelled against their leadership, actually strengthened their position for a time; for in the struggle between the Crown and the Hungarian nation of which Hungarian history came to consist behind its mask of loyal protestations, the middle party, which had a foot in either camp, which alone could reconcile the conflicting interests and could tip the balance either way at will, and which neither side could afford to offend, was in the happiest position of all. Francis Joseph had some few

of them executed in 1849, but was soon forced to seek the support of the survivors, since without it he ran the risk of a second war with no Czar to help him. The Hungarian nationalists were equally unable to deal with the Crown without their aid. The result was the Compromise of 1867, which pleased neither the Crown nor the nationalists, but admirably suited the magnates, who both devised and negotiated it and remained throughout its most staunch upholders.

Under the Dualist system they continued to prosper exceedingly. They lost considerable revenues when the feudal dues were abolished, but their estates were treated tenderly (whereas those of the politically less reliable gentry were put under requisition in fairly drastic fashion for the agrarian reform of the mid-century) and the legislation was arranged so that they should not suffer any too great losses ; nor was any attempt ever made subsequently, either in Parliament or in the Counties, to attack their social or economic interests. The reform of the Upper House in 1885, which confined membership of that body to those of their number who paid a certain minimum in direct taxation, only strengthened the position of the great families by lopping off the dead wood, while the outward forms were so anxiously preserved that Hungary still looked more like a medieval State, based on the system of Estates, than a modern one in which all men were equal.

Indeed, a feature of the latter half of the nineteenth century was the expansion of the larger estates at the expense, in particular, of the medium-sized holdings. The area of the vast family entails, or "fidei commis", which vested property inalienably in all members of a certain family, the head of which enjoyed the benefit of it, actually increased

by nearly 600,000 yokes in the thirty years between 1870 and 1900, and their number rose from thirty-seven to eighty-eight. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the entailed estates of the Princes and Counts Esterházy covered no less than 516,000 yokes, those of the Counts Schönborn 241,000, of the Counts Károlyi 174,000, of the Counts Pálffy 104,000; and there were half a dozen other entails of 50,000 yokes or more. 1,945 large proprietors held between them almost one-third, and that the best third, of the entire arable area of Hungary.

Not even the World War and the years which followed it—so disastrous to the great landed proprietors in many countries—affected the holdings of the Hungarian magnates to any great extent. They lost most of their estates in the new Successor States—expropriated, for the most part, against a mere pittance of compensation—but in Hungary itself no such process took place. Had Bela Kun followed the practice of most revolutionaries and divided up the estates among the peasants, it might have been difficult, even in Hungary, to dispossess the new owners. But Kun left the big estates intact, and the counter-revolution had nothing to do except to hand them back to their former owners.

The agrarian reform carried through since that date has, on the whole, treated the magnates (except Count Károlyi, the whole of whose non-entailed property was confiscated and distributed) tenderly enough. They were forced to yield up only a small portion of their estates, and received gentlemanly compensation. Of Hungary's total area of 16,148,314 yokes, 5,383,482 were in 1925 in the hands of only 1,130 proprietors, representing a smaller number of closely related families; and the position has changed but little since. The Princes Esterházy still possess something over 200,000 yokes; the

Festetics nearly 100,000; and there are other families whose estates cover many square miles.

The outward position of the magnates has changed as little. Their titles have remained intact. The new reform of the Upper House in 1926 still left them in possession of a very generous representation in that House, and the Hungarian electoral system allows every facility to those of their number who desire to win their own laurels, to enter the Lower House as Deputies by election. The old proverb that you cannot do anything in Hungary—not even a revolution—without a Count seems to have lost little of its truth. Count Mihály Károlyi's unfortunate Cabinet which proclaimed Hungary a republic in 1918 contained two representatives of the very first families of the land—Károlyi himself and Count Theodore Batthyány, nephew of the patriot executed by Francis Joseph's orders in 1849. After the restoration, once the well-meant efforts of British diplomacy had been safely side-tracked, Hungary was ruled for twelve years by three successive cabinets, headed respectively by Count Pál Teleki, Count István Bethlen, and Count Gyula Károlyi, of which Count Bethlen's Government, which held office for ten years, was as thoroughly representative of the magnate outlook as any which Hungary has yet known.

And yet, although the magnates still stand unmoved where they have stood so long, the ground beneath them has been gradually undermined for almost a century past. Even by 1867, the initiative had begun to pass from them. The increasingly complex business of modern affairs was falling more and more into the hands of the middle-class gentry, often of men of quite humble origin, while the magnates (always with honourable exceptions) became a retardative force, interested mainly in

saving what they could for their class. The story of their gradual abdication from power may be read plainly enough from any record of the governing classes—say the portrait gallery of Főispáns and Alispáns on the walls of a County Hall. The portraits of a century ago are almost exclusively those of magnates, and the same names, the Pálffys, Zichys, Erdödys, Széchenyis, and the rest seen in almost every gallery. The modern faces are far less romantic, and the names under them are often plain Szabós and Tóths.

So long as the monarchy was there to support them the magnates could afford to rest on their laurels. But the separation of Hungary from Austria and the disappearance of their great ally changed the situation. They were left face to face with a class which has perhaps never loved them, even if it has seldom dared to defy them. That the loss is a real one is proved by the enormous importance which most of them attach to a Habsburg restoration.

But the true underlying causes of their decay lie deeper still. In the last resort, power rests largely on wealth, and modern conditions have brought the great Hungarian houses not wealth but poverty. To some of their colleagues in England, Bohemia, or Silesia, the industrial revolution came with a whole apron full of free gifts. What matter if the price of wheat fell and the harvester was so unreasonable as to demand a living wage, when iron and coal flowed from beneath their acres to turn into gold in their pockets, and a dense urban population thronged to pay them gratifying sums every quarter-day? But the great Hungarian estates are almost purely agricultural. When the supply of docile free labour halted, their structure rocked; when the price of agricultural products fell, they fell with it. Their training and tradition had not made it

easy for them to adapt themselves to a new world. It had been too easy to find a Crown which would arrange for the remission of old debts, a Jew who would help in the contracting of new ones, an elastic-minded Parliament to vote subsidies to keep prices of produce up, a wages clause to keep the cost of labour down, or other more recondite measures. The system specially devised for their benefit seemed eternal, and the habit of relying on it, and of spending lightly in jovial luxury the money so lightly come by, had become ingrained. Yet all these devices were like the old woman's attempts to sweep back the sea with a broom, as the machine-harvested acreage under wheat in Canada and the Argentine extended implacably, year after year, and by encouraging false hopes, probably did more harm than good.

To-day there is hardly one of the magnates who enjoys what an English middle-class business man would describe as a decent income, and most of them are head over ears in debt. The fact weighs on them, perhaps, less than it would on the members of the corresponding class elsewhere; but even a Hungarian nobleman cannot permanently defy economic laws, although he can come nearer it than most people.

When Prince Tassilo Festetics, the second landed proprietor of Hungary (his estates amounted to close on 100,000 yokes) died in May 1933, the Press lamented the passing of an age. It might be equally fair to fix the date of the passing as that of the fall of Count Bethlen's Government. The chorus of adulation which was wont to greet Count Bethlen's every move was the swan song of a regime which is hardly likely to recur in Hungary. In 1933 Hungary enjoyed the unique experience of a cabinet in which there was not a single titled member, and whose leader had the audacity to speak of the

necessity of finding "a new aristocracy, an aristocracy of merit, which would not exclude Counts if they were hard-working and industrious, but would exclude those Counts who wasted the wealth of their forefathers in bars and nightclubs".

This does not mean, of course, that the magnates are a spent force, either socially or politically. Hungary is still one of the most aristocratic countries in the world, and one of those in which the Conservative elements are the most genuinely united. The landowners in particular can usually rest assured that nothing will be done to attack seriously the essential bases of their power. It is, however, characteristic that whereas even up to 1931, under Count Bethlen's regime, the Party of Unity was largely a magnates' party, to-day it represents mainly the gentry, while the magnates are gathered more and more into the so-called Christian Social Economic Party. Although founded largely to represent the interests of the more Conservative peasants, this party has become increasingly the stronghold of the great landowners and princes of the Church, and it is interesting to remember that while the Christian Social Party is strongly legitimist, the genuine peasants' party, led by Szabó of Nagytád, which existed after the war, took up a very definite anti-legitimist attitude.

The Christian Social Party formed part of the Government bloc until early in 1933, when it went into opposition, not on social or economic issue, but on the ground that General Gömbös was displaying dictatorial tendencies, and in particular, on account of his barely concealed anti-legitimist policy. It is the old story of the opposition between the Catholic, legitimist West of the magnates and clerical powers, and the nationalist gentry of Eastern Hungary. On the Austrian frontier the magnates

are still a force, but without the Crown to support them, they are only a shadow of their old greatness.

It is partly a genuine inherent loyalty, but partly also knowledge of this fact that makes the magnates so anxious to-day to see the return of their old allies, the Habsburgs. Some of them even seem ready to ally themselves with other social classes which find the present regime tyrannous. But these flirtations have not yet gone very far, and although all agrarians have certain common interests against the towns, yet the differences between the big landowners and the small peasants and landless agricultural labourers are so deep that a united agrarian front is becoming less, and not more, of a probability as the peasants gradually awaken to political consciousness.

The relative decrease in the power of the magnates is not wholly a matter for rejoicing, even among those who stand outside their ranks. In private life, they are among the most charming of their class. They are kindly, generous, and hospitable, and in their way, good masters to their servants. Their relations with their immediate dependents, especially among the older generation, are often extremely happy. Nor is it fair to take as representative of them the group among them which supplies the gossip-mongers of Budapest, and even the police-court columns of the press, with all too ample material. Tales of riotous extravagance, gambling, and cheating at play have done much to alienate from them the sympathy of other classes. The spendthrifts and gamblers are, however, only a section. The younger generation has not, perhaps, met adversity with such a good face as might have been hoped from their fathers' sons ; but many even among them are exceedingly intelligent and cultivated. Culturally they have done much for their country, and this was almost the rule in the past.

They have been generous and understanding patrons of the arts, which they have often exercised themselves with much skill.

Politically, too, they have had a great historical role to play in their day, and have played it well. In spite of a tendency to treat the interest, the office, and even the material resources of the State as their private perquisite, they have behind them a long tradition of political activity and public service which has distinguished them greatly, and much to their advantage, from their colleagues in many other countries. If nothing could be done in Hungary without a Count, this was due at least in part to the fact that in Hungary it was never impossible to find a Count both ready and able to do it. The debates in the Upper House, particularly on questions of foreign policy, maintain an astonishingly high level; and among the recent statesmen of the Monarchy, the names of Apponyi and Andr  ssy are deservedly famous, and there are many more hardly less distinguished. Hungary could ill afford to do without this element, which, to the patriotism which is common to all her leaders, has added a breadth of vision and a knowledge of the world sometimes lacking in those whose training has been more local.

THE GENTRY

To the reader of romances, and even to the ordinary tourist, especially if he or she travels with good recommendations, the magnate, with his country mansion, his polished manners, his reminiscences of Vienna and Ascot, his charming wife who, like himself, speaks excellent English, and is in all probability his third or fourth cousin through at least one common ancestor, is the typical Magyar. Not so to the born Hungarian, who envies the magnate and pays him every form of respect, but in a corner of his heart despises him for his foreign ways, and is well aware that the magnates are only the façade of the "nation", while the solid fabric is composed of the lesser nobles, the old *servientes regis*, known to-day in popular parlance as the "gentry".

The name is an apt one, for the English word "noble" has altogether too exalted a social connotation, whereas the name of gentleman, in its heraldic sense of an armiger, exactly describes the status of this class. Even more exact, to those familiar with Irish conditions, would be the name of squireen: for the smaller landowners of Hungary and Ireland have much in common, both in their political function, their manner of living, even their personal character, and their numbers. The true grandee is rare everywhere, even in Hungary, and has, moreover, never been a wholly national figure. In recent centuries, in particular, he has tended to represent foreign influences and even foreign interests. But the country gentleman is as native to the country, and as familiar a spectacle in

it, as the stork which nests on his roof-tree. It is he, more than the magnate, more than the peasant, far more than the merchant or manufacturer, who has made, and keeps, Hungary what it is.

It is impossible, of course, to draw an absolute distinction between the magnates and the gentry. Legally, a difference existed only for a comparatively short period, during which they formed separate Estates, and that difference was always subordinate to the far more essential unity: to the principle that all nobles, from the richest to the poorest, enjoyed "one and the same liberty", and formed equally part of the "nation" with regard to which all non-nobles were as though they had not existed. The true and decisive line in Hungarian society comes always, not between the rich nobleman and the poor, but below the latter. At all times it has been easy for a rich family of gentry to marry into the aristocracy and itself to acquire a title, while the poorer scions of the magnates' houses perforce live a life indistinguishable from that of the gentry.

Yet the traditional world of the typical representative of the gentry is very different from that of the magnate. Instead of half a dozen castles, a white-washed one-storied country house, sheltered from the weather by a few straggling acacias; instead of vast estates scattered over Hungary, administered by a dozen trained managers and cultivated by thousands of subjects (for that is what they amount to), a few scores or hundreds acres, a few peasants, every one of whom he has known from infancy, a Swabian bailiff, half servant, half friend; instead of the palace in Vienna and the jaunts to Paris or Bad Gastein, an occasional week in Budapest with perhaps an agricultural congress for an excuse; instead of the cosmopolitan gaiety of courts and capitals, a game of cards in the evening with the

local priest, the district magistrate, or the notary, with perhaps a neighbour who has driven 5 miles of miry road to take a hand, and once or twice in the winter, a ball in the County Town for his daughters to meet the officers of the garrison. For other distractions, a walk over the dewy stubble, a shot at a covey of partridges or a hare ; for other cares, the endless intricacy of local affairs, the pre-occupation with the falling prices of wheat or wine, and the eternally unsatisfactory nature of the labour market.

It is not without justice that the gentry regard themselves as the representatives *par excellence* of the Hungarian nation. In the first place, they have a historical claim, which fact in itself is not without importance ; for the Magyars, with their passionate devotion to their national traditions, are always prepared to rally round a class which represents those traditions, and are indulgent even towards a weakness if it is ancestral. And the Hungarian gentry, whatever the ancestry of the present components of that class (and it is only a little less mixed than that of the magnates), are, spiritually, the true linear descendants of Arpád's warriors. The position of the magnates is the offspring of a flirtation with Western feudalism ; but Hungary's ancient constitution was made by and for the spiritual ancestors of the gentry, and in preserving it they have in fact been defending, not their own interests alone, but the work of Arpád and St. Stephen also.

In the days when all the " nation " was national in the modern sense of the word, the defence of their liberties by the gentry was chiefly of value to their own class ; to a lesser extent also to the sovereign, but certainly not to the peasants, who might easily have fared better under fewer masters. But during

the long centuries after 1526, when the Crown represented a foreign domination, the magnates and the Catholic Church were its supporters and the foreign colonists its instruments, the gentry earned a more genuine title to call themselves the representatives of Hungary; for it was due to their efforts, and to honourable alliance of the Protestant Churches, that Hungary's constitution was preserved tolerably intact and with it her whole national life saved from the greatest debilitation, perhaps from total extinction.

After generations typified the Hungarian gentleman of those days in the figure of the "*táblabíró*", the County magistrate. For it was in the Counties that Hungarian national life was preserved. The dynasty determined all questions of major policy on its own initiative and in its own interests. The Diet was summoned only in order to grant the necessary supplies of men and money, and when it proved recalcitrant, as was often the case (for once the Turkish danger had been scotched, the Magyars stood to lose far more than they would gain by any expansion of the Habsburg power), the Crown convoked it less and less frequently, carrying on with the help of the standing army and the dues levelled on Hungarian exports.

But the internal administration had to go on, and although the Crown encroached upon it here and there, it perforce left most of it in the hands of the old authorities, who were precisely the gentry (since the magnates had gone flocking off to Vienna). The County was the domain of the *táblabíró*, where he played his part for good and evil, in the making of Hungary—a part the influence of which is strong in Hungary to-day.

Any Hungarian must be an ingrate who should deny his country's debt to its old defenders. "Who,"

writes Jokai at the opening of one of his novels, "preserved intact the nation's manners, its receptiveness to culture, its holy love of the fatherland? Who was its pioneer in the path of religion, knowledge, and virtue? The good old táblabirós. Who was it to whom the Magyar owes it that he did not crumble away after 300 years of history, like the avalanche fallen into the valley, but when the magnates forsook him, when the peasantry sank into misery or counted for nought in the scales of destiny—yet lived, bloomed again, and grew strong? We owe everything, everything to those mocked, despised old táblabirós, now crumbled to dust and laid for ever to rest."

The tribute is deserved, for it was only thanks to the stubborn and most courageous defence put up by the Counties against what seemed overwhelming odds that in an age when so many countries lost almost the memory of their old independence, Hungary preserved an unbroken continuity of historical rights. And although the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries proved the idea of national self-determination to be of such elemental force that it could break through any barriers and help the poorest and weakest nation to its goal, yet Hungary gained a long start over almost all other nations in Central Europe, except the Poles, in possessing throughout a class not only politically active but also to a high degree politically trained, closely identified with the nation's aspirations towards independence and able to lead it towards its goal. The long and weary road of preparation which the Baltic nationalities, the Ruthenes, and even the Czechs had to tread was spared to Hungary. Her gentry class even retained enough cultural resources to be able to initiate, not only her political revival, but also the cultural and artistic movement

which accompanies and usually precedes every political renaissance. The great figures in this movement in Hungary were nearly all members of the smaller nobility, and their work was far more original, far more truly national than that of most of their colleagues in other countries.

It would be futile to deny that the picture had another side. Indirectly, the Hungarian gentry were, indeed, defending the national life of their whole country against Vienna; but the actual system which they were championing, with so much courage and ingenuity, was a narrow one of class privilege. The "nation" was only a small fraction of the population of Hungary, and the constitution, so far as the work of the Counties was concerned, was simply the instrument for the perpetuation of the privileged position of that minority. The stately periods in which many a County "congregation" was wont to celebrate the ancient liberties of the Hungarian nation—and many meetings spent the greater part of their time in declaiming and applauding orations to this effect—boiled down, only too often, to a determination not to release their unfortunate serfs from the innumerable burdens under which they groaned, or to assume the share of taxation which the welfare of the country demanded. In many of the constitutional contests between the Counties and the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century, reason and progress, not to speak of efficiency, were altogether on the side of the Crown.

The life of the gentry was a narrow one, in every respect. It was not only that they confined all power and privilege to their own class; as a class, they were singularly limited in their activities and outlook. They travelled little, beyond the bounds of their own Counties. Their horizons were bounded

by the little society of their own immediate neighbourhood, with its local politics, its markets, its junketing at election times. They consorted only with their likes, and these consisted of men, not merely of their own class, but also of their own occupation. The only small variant was when some of them entered the Church, where they were little else but landed gentry in priestly robes. Even the army became an unpopular career after the old feudal levy had been replaced by a standing force. It was felt to be an instrument of the dynasty, and not the nation, and was left largely to the Serbs and Croats to officer. The only profession, except the Church, which the sons of the gentry frequented in large numbers (politics were rather a second nature to all gentlemen than a separate career) was that of the Law, in which they developed an extraordinary talent (which has become a national heritage) both in interpreting obscure points of constitutional law in defence of their country's interests, and in fighting out the interminable suits to which the tangled system of entail, further confused by the Turkish occupation, gave rise in almost every family.

It was not without all reason that later generations saw in the figure of the old táblabíró the very personification of obscurantism and reaction. The most entertaining of all the older Hungarian novels, Eötvös' *Village Notary*, is a brilliant and merciless exposure of the weaknesses of the old County regime ; the narrowness, the inefficiency, the selfishness, the open and unashamed corruption for which its electoral character offered ample scope. It is true that this picture, being designed as a satire, may well be overdrawn, and there were certainly many kindly and honourable men who fulfilled their duties very differently from the villains of Eötvös' narrative,

but their virtues did not do away with the weaknesses of the system.

The narrowness of the range of interests which they defended even qualifies very seriously the gentry's claim to rank as the defenders of the nation. It was, perhaps, their misfortune rather than their fault that their interests remained so completely divorced from those of the towns, but it was certainly not good for Hungary that the satisfaction of the crying needs of the great majority of its population should have been so stubbornly and violently rejected by the "national" representatives. Had the ruling class shown itself more generous, the measures taken by the Crown in the period of semi-absolutism could hardly have proved so dangerous to Hungarian national unity. Only because its basis was kept so narrow did that unity prove so vulnerable to assault from without. Under a broader and more liberal interpretation of the national cause, the bulk of the new elements would probably have been fully assimilated before the rise of modern nationalism. But they could not be expected to give their devotion to a system which summed up their condition in the words *misera contribuens plebs*, and spent its chief energies and undeniable talents in keeping them in that position.

Yet with all their weaknesses, the Hungarian gentry kept the flame of the nation's life burning into the nineteenth century, and successfully led the movement of national revival which culminated in 1848. For although the great inspirer of the new Hungary, Count Széchenyi, was an aristocrat, yet the re-establishment of Hungarian liberty was indisputably the work of the gentry under Kossuth. The magnates acted only the part of intermediaries between the nation and the Crown, and when events were heading for a crisis, were

driven increasingly to act simply as brakes on the wheel.

Again, in the years which followed 1849, if it was the magnates who brought about the Compromise with the Crown, it was the gentry who, by their stubborn resistance to the Bach administration, had driven Francis Joseph from autocracy into compromise. The magnates led the nation into the promised land, but it was the gentry who had made the journey possible.

The great part of the work of organizing and leading the new State thus fell inevitably on their shoulders. The magnates sat in the Cabinets, in the Főispáns' offices, in the Upper House. They contributed their quota to the Diplomatic Service and the crack cavalry regiments of the Dual Monarchy, and they helped, above all things, to secure Hungary's place in the Monarchy, and to safeguard her interests in its international policy. But they were too few, even if they had not been too little in sympathy with the narrower world of purely Hungarian affairs, to concern themselves with the thousand and one less spectacular details which had now to be settled. The staffing of the new ministries in Budapest and the ever-growing County administrations, the officering of the Honvéd regiments, the supply of teachers to the Universities and High Schools—all this was the natural prerogative of the lesser gentry.

Natural for more than one reason. In the first place, the number of persons in Hungary whose training and education, by any standard, fitted them for such tasks was genuinely small. How small may be seen from the fact that in spite of the intense unpopularity of the "Bach Hussars", a not inconsiderable number of them actually remained at their posts when the Austrian rule was withdrawn.

Very few of the peasant class were fitted to undertake any duties outside their own sphere; and where the ability was present, a century-old tradition prevented them from venturing forward, or from being readily accepted.

But fully as important as the question of technical qualifications was that of political outlook. The gentry had themselves taken the lead in 1848 in bringing about many very important social reforms. But their conception of what was the right and proper structure of Hungarian society had not changed, while their views on the national question had even been hardened by the events of 1848 and 1849. After 1867 they felt themselves free once more to fashion the State according to their own ideals. The "nation" had not renounced its historic role; it had only conceded a point here and there in order to win more liberty for completing its task.

On the other hand, the new opportunities for State service came in remarkably handy for many of them. The changes introduced after 1848, which the great landowners were able to weather successfully, were disastrous to the economic position of the smaller men. The abolition of the feudal dues deprived them not only of their supply of unpaid labour, but of much else besides; for under the old system the peasant had not merely been bound to give his own work, but to provide the services of his own implements, draught animals, and carts. The proprietors, who had grown accustomed to relying on these services, found themselves, at one blow, left with little more than their houses and their land—and not even their land intact; for the Austrian officials of the Bach regime who carried through the agrarian reform originally voted by the Hungarians themselves, saw to it that the lands allotted to the peasants were taken from the estates of this most

turbulent and unreliable (from their point of view), of all the classes in Hungary. True, they received a certain compensation, but it seems a law of history that compensation is never adequate in cases of land reform. In Hungary, not only was this sum paid in a paper currency which depreciated rapidly, but it was calculated on the basis only of the value of dues in cash or kind which the landlord had received from his peasants, while total value of *corvées* and other services which had formed far the greater part of his benefits, was ignored finally. From now onward the noble estates were subjected to taxation from which they had previously been exempt. Nor, it must be admitted, were the recipients fitted by their training and traditions to make the wisest use of such compensation as they did receive. Too often, the windfalls were soon gone—sometimes merely in unwise investment, often in the attempt to keep up a standard of living better fitted to past traditions than to present resources, not infrequently in gambling. Even the safer sort found it difficult to keep their heads above water, since the country in general was short of capital, and interest rates on the money which the most prudent farmer must often borrow were, as a rule, exorbitantly high. Then, to the normal difficulties of the transition period, were added a series of special misfortunes: the phylloxera in the vineyards, cattle plague in the north, swine fever in the south, a series of disastrous harvests; and to cap all, the great agricultural depression which set in at the end of the nineteenth century, affecting not Hungary alone, but all Europe. In the early part of the twentieth century came a certain revival, and in the War, a short-lived boom, but the post-War period brought a depression of unparalleled severity, against which Hungarian agriculture is still struggling.

The result of this prolonged series of misfortunes was to change the economic basis of the gentry class altogether. While the proportion of large estates to the total cultivable area remained, and remains, almost unchanged, that of the medium-sized estates, from 100 to 1,000 yokes, dwindled steadily. In the early years of the twentieth century it was no more than 15 per cent., and even of these estates, a not inconsiderable proportion were in the hands of wealthy peasants, and others belonged only in name to their titular owners, but in reality, to the holders of the mortgages on them. Only a fraction of the old gentry had maintained their position on the land intact; the majority were driven gradually but implacably into the towns.

In most countries such a process would have meant the political, as well as the economic disintegration of the gentry, unless they proved capable of themselves taking charge of the new economic forces which were developing in Hungary; and this, as a class, they failed signally to do. Their lack of taste and capacity for business has remained as pronounced as ever, and even to-day there is hardly a single Magyar, of true Magyar stock, possessed of an appreciable income not derived from land—which amounts, under present circumstances, to saying that there are hardly any wealthy Magyars at all.

But to suppose that the inability of a Hungarian gentleman to make money would be regarded either by himself or by anyone else in the country as a sign of weakness would be to reckon without either the conservatism of Hungarian society, or its habitual and magnanimous refusal to identify wealth with power. As has been said, the period of their economic collapse coincided with that of their country's political independence and development, and the

ruined landowner found a new career awaiting him as a magistrate, officer, clerk in a Budapest Ministry, or teacher at a High School or University. It is, perhaps, not easy to decide how far the man was made for the job, how far the job for the man. Later historians have suggested that practically the only social policy of Kálmán Tisza's long period of rule consisted in safeguarding the position of this single class, by creating a sufficiency of administrative posts to absorb them as they were driven from the land. Certainly Trianon Hungary went to great sacrifices to provide posts or pensions for the exiles from those parts of Hungary assigned to the Successor States. Even to-day, the proportion of the State budget which has to be devoted to the payment of State employees, and particularly to pensions, is enormous, and constitutes an exceedingly heavy burden on her finances.¹ This is a special case; but the number of State employees had already risen enormously in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and that despite the fact that the Magyar, unlike the German, is not naturally sympathetic to bureaucratic rule or methods.

The alien bureaucracy of the "Bach Hussars" was, however, very different from the rule of the gentry. This was something familiar and natural to Hungary, for it differed very little from the old system of pre-Revolution days. Then the gentry were paid directly by the labour of their peasants; now the money was collected in the form of taxes and passed on as salaries. Then, they were a social class exercising political functions; it would be hard to describe them differently to-day.

¹ State pensions in the 1933 budget amounted to 225 million pengő, as against 145 million in 1924-5, and only 67 million in 1913. Of the last huge figure, 36 million pengő were "Trianon pensions", i.e. sums paid to ex-officials from the Successor States.

For the transformation of their economic position brought little change in their mental outlook. They remained at once the servants of the State, and its beneficiaries. How integral a part they were—and are—of the ruling system may be seen from the fact that active officials were permitted, and even encouraged, to enter Parliament. Only in 1934 was a law introduced, for the first time, suspending them temporarily from their official posts while Members of Parliament. At that time it was stated that over 60 per cent. of the then Parliament consisted of public officials.¹ A considerable proportion of the remainder certainly consisted of men whose near relatives were officials. Thus a civil servant had every reason to support a Government with which he was so closely connected. The inducement was the stronger because posts in the civil service were normally allotted through nomination or recommendation alone, and thus tended to remain in the hands of the same well-tried families; while the character of the electoral system, with its restricted franchise and open voting, at once facilitated the progress of the man of orthodox views, and imposed caution on any possible exceptions.

This very intimate connection, amounting practically to identity, with the ruling caste proved at once the strength and the weakness of the gentry in their new role—a strength and a weakness which are much the same, in each case, as they were in the eighteenth century.

Regarded purely as a machine, the Hungarian system occupies a place somewhat higher than the middle. While probably less efficient, more liable to delay and obstruction, than that of Germany, England, or even the Austrian Republic, it is far superior to that of most of the countries of Central

¹ Stated by Deputy István Friedrich, *Pester Lloyd*, 15th December, 1933.

and Eastern Europe ; less cumbersome, less corrupt, far more intelligent. Its great strength lies, firstly in the natural keen intelligence of its components, which brings with it, for example, an extraordinarily high technical standard in most of its educational work, and in their very sincere patriotism. Although many of the posts created to accommodate their holders may have been easy ones, yet no exertion, no sacrifice is too great for any member of the ancient gentry class in the service of his country.

The great weakness lies in the absence of a true social conscience. The Hungarian "nation" was so long confined to a small minority of the population that it is difficult for its servants to understand that this is no longer the case. The difference between the treatment accorded, even by minor officials, to a "gentleman" and that given to a peasant or a small Jew, is often such as to impress unpleasantly a visitor from more democratic countries. Nor is the matter one of courtesy alone ; the whole system still rests in a differentiation which has disappeared in law, but not in name.

It is, perhaps, curious that the middle-class officials and their class-fellows in the free professions did not develop a more independent social and political outlook of their own. It is, however, a fact that they have supported, with the utmost loyalty, an economic system which had ceased to be particularly favourable to them. Partly, this may be due to a form of romanticism, which makes every Magyar gentleman still feel himself, at heart, a landed proprietor, and serve the interests of landed property even when they are in fact no longer his own.

"Many of the old gentry," writes Count Mailáth, in a lament on the weakness of the Hungarian middle class, "instead of increasing their numbers by

combining with the 'small men' who engage in other occupations and are of a practical turn of mind, esteem them but little and do not care to consort with them. They make all the greater efforts to create links with the upper classes of society; they wish to become powerful and famous men and to make their fortunes. . . . For them the aim of education is not to teach them anything, but to allow them to live easily, to display a greater luxury, and to await, if need be, some high post. This hollow but apparently brilliant manner of living exercises a charm on the other 'small men' who follow their example: their ideal becomes that of getting a good job, so that they may play a part at the expense of the State and become Méltóságos (your Honour) or Nagyságos (your Worship). The little official plays at the great lord and has no time to occupy himself with his poor family." ¹

Partly this failure to develop an independent outlook is due, no doubt, to the fact that pre-War Hungary was, after all, able to afford most of them tolerable and even comfortable existences, and thus release their energies for the struggle which occupied most of their attention: the national conflict.

For the gentry and the gentry-bureaucracy have always been the heart and soul of the Hungarian national movement. It was they who led the nation against the Habsburgs, both before 1848 and after 1867. It was they who formed the parties of independence which were continuously striving to weaken the link, to extort the uttermost advantage out of the Compromise, to make Hungary an entirely independent State. Less experienced and less far-seeing than the magnates, besides benefiting less

¹ Count J. de Mailáth, *La Hongrie, rurale, sociale, et politique*, Paris, 1909, p. 45.

from the Habsburg connection, they were ever blind to its advantages, and to the dangers which attended its dissolution.

It was they, too, who led the campaign against the nationalities in Hungary. Here they had, it is true, a certain direct economic stake; for only a Magyar Hungary could supply posts for all the Magyar officials, schoolmasters, etc., to the exclusion of the intelligentsia of nearly half the country's total population. Their guiding motive was, however, political and patriotic rather than economic. The weakness in their policy must be ascribed, again, to a restricted vision, to inexperience, and to the incurable optimism of the Magyar nation. A few of them saw that the only practical alternative to the Habsburg connection was a policy of understanding with the nationalities. Such was the policy of Lajos Kossuth in his later, and wiser, period; of some of the stalwarts of the "'48 Party"; and of Jászi. But most of the gentry entirely underrated the difficulties of their task and threw themselves with undaunted vigour into the impossible task of Magyarizing Hungary. It was they who developed, not quite to its utmost pitch (for the Magyarized Jews went far beyond them), but to a degree seldom met with in any country, the fanatical chauvinism which so dismally failed of its purpose, and led them in the end to a Hungary free, indeed, but reduced to a third of its area.

The immediate result of the War and the revolutions has been to make the internal position of the gentry, for the present at least, practically impregnable. The Peace Treaty swept most of their adversaries clean off the political chessboard. The nationalities, with few exceptions, have been assigned to the Successor States; the Crown is in abeyance, and the magnates have lost much of their influence

with the absence of the Crown and the diminution of their incomes. Owing, finally, to the peculiar circumstances of 1919, the revolution of the dispossessed classes brought them more losses than gains, and afforded every excuse to suppress any further activities on their part in the name of Hungary's "national policy".

A great factor in the rise of the gentry was the elevation to the supreme power in the State, in 1920, of one of their representatives, Admiral Horthy. Although Bethlen, a magnate, was Minister-President for ten years, certain key positions always remained in the hands of Horthy's men, and since 1932 one of his faithful adjutants, General Gömbös, has been Minister-President, with a Cabinet drawn almost exclusively from the ranks of the gentry. The army, the gendarmerie, and the civil service are already mainly in his hands, and there have recently been signs (which have awakened much uneasiness among his opponents) that he will prepare to make his hold over the great mass of civil servants more secure still. The Party of Unity itself, the great governing political party in Hungary, is composed mainly of the gentry class, while all outside it, including the magnates, are being driven into opposition.

In many respects this evolution was inevitable. In nearly every country's history there comes a day when the middle class shoulders aside its former leaders and openly takes over the power for itself. Moreover, the Hungarian gentry represent not only a social but also a national idea. They have always fought for the cause of the Magyar spirit against foreign influences, and now that those influences have been removed (much more extensively than they themselves desired) they are reaping their natural reward.

For the present it does not seem likely that their power will be challenged, nor, despite the frequent and obviously sincere appeals of General Gömbös for national unity, does it seem probable that their general outlook or policy will change in any important respect. The swing towards the left in social matters, which was fairly apparent towards the end of the War, has been succeeded by an equally pronounced reaction. The energies spent in earlier years on the national struggle inside Hungary are now directed, with equal vigour and unchanged outlook, towards a campaign for treaty revision. The tenacious opposition to the Habsburgs is hardly relaxed, although less openly expressed; for the fact that the Czechs and Roumanians are also opposed to a Habsburg restoration naturally makes a Magyar chary of owning to the same sentiment. But those who wish to prophecy the future of the gentry's rule in Hungary can probably get no small enlightenment by studying the history of the same class in the past.

THE TRADERS

The social and economic ideals of the true Magyar are incorporated faithfully enough in the villages which dot the broad, flat expanses of the two Alfölds. The whole picture is dominated by the big house, where it stands in its park, surrounded by spacious stables and the outbuildings of the home farm. Between the acacias it is easy to see the big, low building, and to trace the outline of the coronet above the architrave of its pillared portico. Next in importance comes the church, whose spire or onion-shaped tower rises symbolically above the flat surrounding country. The village itself is a regular pattern of very wide streets, most of them unpaved, the basking-place of pigs and poultry and geese, geese, endless geese; and bounding the street, rows of little whitewashed, one-storied houses, each with its narrow end turned to the street, while between its verandahed face, and its neighbour's back, is a sandy courtyard, a well, a few sunflowers. Behind, opening straight onto the fields, are byres, barn, and stable. It is a community which reeks of the soil. Every man in it, from the local magnate downward, lives by, on, and from the soil. The fields stretch up to the very doors, and the fruits of them are scattered in the courtyards. The few craftsmen, who advertise their skill by a painted sign of smock, boot, or scythe, the cobbler, smith, and tailor, are themselves most often peasants who ply their trade in their spare hours.

The smaller country towns of the Magyars differ from the villages only in degree. The business of local administration may be imposing enough to

require a town hall and a police barracks ; there are branches of the local banks, a resident doctor, dentist, and vet. There are many inns to quench the thirst of the market-day crowd, and above all, the market itself—a great dusty space, empty and desolate save at due season, when it fills to overflowing with a vociferous multitude of men and beasts.

Even some of the very largest towns of Hungary have preserved this character, particularly in the districts occupied by the Turks. The inhabitants flocked together for mutual protection, and thus there grew up the extraordinary towns of the Alföld : Kekskemét, Nyiregyháza, Szentés, Jászberény, and even Szeged and Debreczen, the second and third towns, respectively, of Hungary. Szeged has a new University and a palatial square modelled on the Piazza San Marco ; Debreczen an admirably organized University College. Both, naturally, have large municipal buildings, hotels, a few factories, cathedrals, parks, and trams. Yet they remain in essence magnified and glorified villages. A very high proportion of their inhabitants are still land-owners—many of them actual peasants who go out day by day into the fields, while others are owners of estates in the country on which they spend half their time. They possess communal property which is nothing but a village green on the vastest scale known to Europe, although hard to recognize as such when, as in the case of Debreczen, it lies 20 miles from the town and extends over many scores of square miles. Many of the suburbs look exactly like any other village, and have their full complement of peasant women, wells, geese wandering about the streets, and pigs nosing their way in and out of the court-yards. Nature herself refuses to recognize these places as withdrawn from

her jurisdiction ; I have heard a quail calling in a garden not two hundred yards from the great Protestant Cathedral which dominates the main street of Debreczen.

Thus has the Magyar created his habitations in his own image. But they do not comprise all the urban life of his country. Scattered over the length and breadth of the old Hungary, from Sopron and Pozsony in the west to Brasso and Besztercze in far Transylvania, from Pécs to Eger, are scores of little, ancient towns. Nestling cosily within their venerable city walls, with their substantial two-storyed, gabled houses, their multiplicity of churches, their general air of staid and disapproving respectability, they seem, as they drowse in the sunlight, to belong to another world from the sprawling and polysyllabic joviality of Nyiregyháza or Hodmezövásárhely. Rather they carry the traveller's imagination back, far away from the thirsty plains and the interminable wind-swept expanses of wheat and maize, westward to the cosy, sheltered valleys, the green fir-woods and purling streams of the Vosges or Luxemburg.

And, indeed, these were the homes of a race whose virtues and vices are almost the exact antithesis of those of the Magyars, among whom they live. They owe their existence to this very fact ; for the lordly inability of the Magyar warriors to earn hard cash themselves and their insuperable reluctance to part with any which they might have obtained from others, forced their kings, for whom ready money was always an essential, to invite to their country subjects who might prove less successfully defiant of the tax-collector.

Almost all the kings of Hungary, from the Arpáds to the Habsburgs, have followed the same policy, and the great majority of Hungarian towns that

were anything more than mere markets were founded by kings, from a nucleus of foreign immigrants, and owed their survival to royal protection. Thus, by their very origin they were the allies of the Crown against the nobility, and differed from the countryside, from the first, not only in national composition and even language, but also in their interests, both economic and political. It is this fact that makes the relations between town and country in Hungary so unlike those in England or France, although very similar conditions existed in other Central European countries, such as Bohemia and Poland. Seventy years of modern conditions have not yet swept away all the traces of so many past centuries; and the trading and manufacturing class in Hungary have never yet come to form an integral part of the national society.

The prospect of exploiting Hungary's immense national resources attracted to the country adventurers of many nationalities. We read in early historic documents of Jews and "Ishmaelites"¹ who seem to have performed the functions of a middle class under the earliest Arpáds. The Angevins—great patrons of the cities—imported Italians and Walloons. Much later, during the Turkish period and in the areas under Turkish rule, considerable numbers of those nationalities which have traditionally filled the role of middle classes under the Ottoman Empire—Greeks and Armenians—entered Hungary. Large Serbian trading colonies grew up both in such towns of Southern Hungary as Ujvidék, Szabadka, and Temesvár, and even as far north as Budapest.

By far the most numerous and important element in the Hungarian towns was, however, the German.

¹ The "Ishmaelites" are supposed to have been Mahomedan Bulgars from Great Bolgary on the Kama near the present Nizhni-Novgorod.

Their essentially bourgeois mentality, their unequalled and undenied skill, training, and culture marked the Germans out as the obvious candidates for the position, while their caution in making good terms before they embarked on the adventure and their sturdy independence enabled them successfully to resist the repeated attacks made upon their liberties by the feudal nobles, and to maintain their position where members of weaker races became Magyarized and sank into the position of peasants. Even the national Hungarian kings of the earlier centuries appreciated the Western culture which the Germans brought with them—only the Italians could perhaps rival them in this respect—and welcomed their arrival. Thus, even in quite early medieval times, the towns of Hungary were mainly German. This tendency was naturally reinforced when the Habsburgs—themselves of Germanic stock, and having at their disposal a vast reservoir of German subjects on which to draw—ascended the throne. In their case, an additional, political consideration was now present: for if the Arpáds had encouraged German immigration to strengthen the Hungarian nation, the Habsburgs did so to weaken it. Thus, although in the extreme south the Germans, who, as a Western nation, had fared ill under the Turks, were partly replaced by Serbs, and one or two towns, notably Debreczen, had developed as mainly Magyar centres, elsewhere the Germans still reigned supreme in the towns in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and even the early nineteenth centuries. Buda, Pest, Pozsony, Sopron, Eger, the mining towns of Szepes in the north, were well-nigh as Germanic as Frankfurt or Cologne.

Hungary owes much to her German townsmen. An eighteenth-century writer, a Magyar, admits that, "It may be said of all the Royal and Free

Cities that their wealth and culture are proportionate to the number of German settlements which they have admitted,"¹ and no unprejudiced writers deny that the general level of culture and education in the German towns, as well as their commercial and industrial methods, were far in advance of the Magyars' standards of the day. Unluckily, for political and for economic reasons alike, the burghers of the towns and the County nobles remained steadily and increasingly hostile to one another. The nobles were constantly endeavouring to undermine the positions of the towns, destroy their privileges, and incorporate them in the County system. They did, in fact, impose and maintain a system of representation which was almost ludicrously unfair: for in the County assemblies, in which every noble, even though in all but his title he might be nothing but an illiterate peasant, had a seat and vote, the entire population of a Royal Free City would be represented by a single vote, while in the national Diet the forty-nine Cities together counted for no more than a single one of Hungary's fifty-six counties.

The Cities, while complaining bitterly of these injustices, clung with fanatical rigidity to the monopolies vested by ancient privilege in their Guilds and Corporations; treated the welfare of the country as a whole as a matter of entire indifference to them, and often resisted reforms which would certainly have benefited Hungary and, ultimately, themselves, if some ancient and obsolete vested interest seemed endangered by them.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the absolutist Habsburgs began their prolonged assault upon Hungary's national existence, deeper political differences appeared; for the burghers

¹ Mátyás Bél, *Not. Hung. Nov.*, p. 647; Ct. Marczali, *Hungary in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 208.

allied themselves with the Crown and assisted its policy of Germanization and its efforts to sweep away the Hungarian Constitution.

The nineteenth century, however, brought rather a remarkable change. Just as the Liberal party among the smaller nobles rebelled against the privileges of the nobles themselves, so in the towns the oligarchy of the handful of "patricians" who had come to usurp all power and privilege, concentrating in their own hands membership of the Guilds, of the City administration, and of the electoral colleges, was threatened by the revolt of the far larger number of late-comers, *inquilini*, who, like the peasants in the countryside, carried all the burdens while enjoying none of the privileges. These dissidents were equally dissatisfied with the policy of their own oligarchy, and with Vienna, its champion, and made common cause with the Magyar Liberals in favour of a free national development of Hungary's economic life. Only the Saxon towns of Transylvania, as a whole, still saw their chief hope in a centralized Austria rather than a free Hungary. In most of the other towns the majority were strongly and sincerely pro-Magyar, and took the Hungarian side in the political and military struggles of 1848-9.¹ A certain reaction followed when the extremist party in Hungary got the upper hand in 1849 and when the Austrian bureaucracy assumed control after the fighting had ceased. Yet Francis Joseph's absolutist regime and expensive military adventures were just as unpopular with

¹ Of Pozsony itself, which lies so close to Vienna and has always been reproached with looking east rather than west, an observer wrote in 1850 that its citizens had been "ultra-Magyar for several years past—could not bear their children to speak anything but Magyar, wore coats braided before and behind . . . put Magyar signs above their shops and stuck Magyar names up on their street-corners". (Max Schlesinger, Ct. R. Kaendl, *Geschichte der Deutschen in den Karpathenländern*, iii, 349.)

the German bourgeoisie of Hungary as they were with the German Liberals of Austria, and the towns welcomed the Compromise of 1867 with its re-establishment of Hungarian liberty.

There followed the new era. With the removal of the old restrictions, the impoverished gentry, the landless peasants and unemployed agricultural labourers poured into the industrial centres, settling in vast and, for the most part, exceedingly squalid congeries on their peripheries. The population of the larger industrial towns rose at an incredible rate. Pest, which had numbered only 280,000 inhabitants in 1867, and 355,682 in 1880, had 928,996 in 1920 and 1,006,184 in 1930. Under the flood of new-comers, the old German burghers were submerged. The smaller business remained, indeed, largely in their hands. They were the artisans, the skilled labourers, the small shopkeepers, the owners of little suburban businesses. A few of them even rose on the tide to great wealth. But as a class, they lost their distinctive character. A couple of generations sufficed to Magyarize them entirely. In 1930 the Germans and Slovaks together made up only 4·5 per cent of the total population of Budapest.

Yet, curiously enough, although Hungary's old commercial and industrial class had been Magyarized, her commerce and industry was not. It was the economically weaker Magyar elements which drifted into the towns; the stronger remained in the country, whence they continued to rule Hungary. Moreover, the new era had changed many things, but one thing it could not touch: the immutable force of national psychology. It could not make the Magyars into natural business men. And so the old gap in the national structure remained and, as in previous centuries, it was filled by a non-Magyar element, and one even more alien to the Magyars

than the Germans themselves. 1867 saw the birth in Hungary of the Jewish problem in its modern form.

The Jewish question in Central and Eastern Europe has an importance and a complexity hard to appreciate for those who have spent their lives in England, who know the Jews merely as a rather large and exotic element in the population of a few localities such as Whitechapel or Brighton, or a few professions such as the Stock Exchange or the old clo's trade. For such persons it is difficult to conceive of a place in which entire towns and entire large sections of society are wholly or mainly Jewish; in which there are whole important and even essential elements of civic life in which the Jewish element is so strong as quite to outweigh the native. Yet no one acquainted with Central Europe will deny that this is the case in many of the States which compose that ill-defined but interesting area; and without full appreciation of this fact, its economic, political, and even social conditions can never be properly understood.

At the 1933 Assembly of the League of Nations the Sixth Committee enjoyed itself thoroughly for several days discussing the Jewish question; and the German delegate put forward the remarkable theory that although the Jews of Germany were racially different from the Germans, and also less numerous, they were not a racial minority, but a social and economic problem. I have struggled long and vainly to understand the logic of this argument; but there is in it a gleam of practical sense. It is true that the Jewish question is quite unlike the ordinary problem presented by the national minority. Certainly, in Hungary, the Jews stand on quite a different footing from any other minority. It is not only that they are far the most

powerful of any nationality of Hungary, after the Magyars themselves—there are, indeed, many who, without malice or sarcasm, would say that to assign them even the second place would be to underestimate their real importance ; but a foreign writer is not, perhaps, required to pronounce on so delicate and controversial an issue of precedence. But they blend with the whole life of the country and influence it in a way which no other minority nationality approaches, and their position cannot be discussed with that of the other minorities.

Lying as she does so near to the main highways of Jewish migration, Hungary was bound to become a considerable Jewish centre. That she has become much more than that : that small as she is to-day, she is the fifth or sixth Jewish power in the world, and in the ratio of her Jewish to her total population probably stands after Poland and Roumania alone, is due to spiritual as well as geographical causes. The lordly Magyar warrior and the laborious and thrifty Hebrew complement one another's needs and proclivities in so providential a fashion that one is tempted to say, slightly paraphrasing Palacky, that if the Hungarian Jew had not existed it would have been necessary to invent him.

For many centuries, however, the part played by the Jews in Hungary was comparatively inconspicuous ; a fact to be explained by the great strength and rigidly monopolistic attitude of the German bourgeoisie. The early Hungarian legislation on Jews is simply an adaptation of that current in the German States of the day, and its clerical origin is patent. It relates chiefly to the prohibition of Jews to keep Christian servants, or to marry Christian wives. Only occasional glimpses show that the Hungarian Jews were no strangers to the normal business cycle of their race and age ; the

discriminatory restrictions, the alliance of interests with some penurious potentate, the business opportunity offered and taken, the rise to favour, then wealth, then power, the reaction and the fall. In the early thirteenth century the unfortunate Andrew II, whose embarrassments, like King John's, were the most solid foundations of his country's constitutional liberties, seems to have entrusted Jews with the management of the royal domains and mints, and the collection of tolls, taxes, and the salt-gabelle. The result was either so profitable to the Jews, or so oppressive to the Gentiles, or both, that Andrew was obliged, in the Golden Bull, to promise not to entrust these offices to Jews, and a few years later he was actually excommunicated by the Pope for continuing to farm the royal revenues to Jews. Thereafter, the kings of Hungary alternately expelled their Jews and recalled them, confiscated their property and put them in the way of acquiring it. Sigismund granted them a "usury privilege" which authorized them to levy the considerable rate of 2 per cent per week. Ladislaus IV decreed that all Jews should, when appearing in public, wear a piece of red cloth as a distinguishing mark, and that a Christian entrusting any office to a Jew should be excommunicated; under Ladislaus Postumus a charge of ritual murder was brought against the Jews of Tyrnau, and many of them were burned at the stake. Many kings, however, notably Matthias Corvinus, treated them wisely and humanely, and they seem seldom to have undergone such persecutions as in Germany. An interesting figure is that of Fortunatus Szerencses, or Salamon Glück, whose career is curiously reminiscent of that of Feuchtwanger's hero, Jud' Süß. He adopted Christianity hurriedly, to escape the consequences of a love affair with a Christian,

but his sons remained Jewish and he was to the last a powerful friend and protector of the Jews, who surrounded him on his death-bed. He was Deputy Treasurer under Louis II, and seems to have embezzled large sums of money and reduced the whole people to misery. The king saved him from execution, but on his death in 1525 his treasures were plundered by the people; they would perhaps have been better employed in equipping an army against the Turks.

Under Austrian rule the Jews were crowded into the northern Counties, which were often called "Magyar Israel", and when the Turks were driven out, the Government tried to prevent the Jews from spreading down into the newly conquered territories. In fact, many of the villages in southern Hungary contain to this day few or no Jews. Nevertheless, a steady influx now began; for very restrictive legislation was applied against Jews in the Austrian provinces (particularly by the decree under which only one male in each family was allowed to marry), and to escape these the Jew took refuge in Hungary. Here they were protected by the magnates, who resisted the royal orders, finding their protégés invaluable in the capacity of "házi zsidó", or "house-Jew", a generic term covering a variety of occupations from baliff and agent to inn-keeper and banker. In 1735 there were only 11,621 Jews living in Hungary, almost exclusively on noble estates; of these, nearly two-thirds were immigrants. The immigration proceeded apace, although Maria Theresa expelled them from Buda, and imposed upon them a heavy "toleration tax". By 1785 they already numbered 78,000. Joseph II wiped out at a stroke almost all the oppressive disabilities which had survived from earlier centuries—although the gratitude of the

Jews was tempered by their consternation at the fact that with their disabilities (which had included the prohibition of wearing swords) they also lost their exemption from military service. A decree ordaining that they should cut off their beards was revoked on their plea that these were a religious necessity and not a social adornment. They were admitted henceforward to the guilds and allowed to own real property in the towns (except the mining towns), but still forbidden to own land, or to rent more than they could themselves farm.

In the nineteenth century the alliance between the Magyars and the Jews, who were animated by a common dislike of Vienna, struck deeper roots. The German bourgeoisie was still hostile and suspicious, but the Diet was favourable to them. In 1840 both Houses asked for the Jews to be allowed full rights of citizenship, but the Crown refused the request, under pressure from the Free Cities. Nevertheless, liberty was in the air, and the Jews, sniffing it, began to prepare for the day of freedom by self-Magyarization. As late as the '40's, contemporary writers had reproached them with leading an obscure and self-contained existence, indifferent to the general interest and even inscrutable to outsiders. Now the Magyar language was studied, taught in the schools, and even used by some Rabbis in their services; the distinctive dress began to vanish.

In 1848 there were severe anti-Jewish riots in many of the Germanic towns, and in the Serbian districts, but the Jews supported the Magyar cause financially, and even fought for it, receiving their reward when the National Assembly at Szeged, on 28th June, 1848, granted them (after considerable delays and hesitations) full emancipation.

This happy state lasted just a fortnight. Victorious

Austria punished the Jews severely for their part in the Hungarian "rebellion", reimposed heavy war-taxes, and dissolved the newly founded Reform Society of Pest, which had been started not only to further the cause of Jewish emancipation, but to foster Hungarian sympathies and culture among the Jews. The subsequent period of extreme Catholic reaction was naturally unfavourable to them, and their emancipation was not carried through until 1862. The last step towards emancipation was taken when Judaism became a "received religion" in 1896, a year after mixed marriages had been permitted.

It was the good fortune of the Jews that their liberation coincided with economic changes peculiarly congenial to their abilities. The entails on the smaller estates had vanished, and a free market in land been established, with the result that many estates were thrown, rather hurriedly, on the market just when it became lawful for Jews to buy and own land. The old guild systems and other restrictions on trade and industry disappeared just when a new period of economic development (partly on that very account) was beginning.

In the next half-century the Jews entrenched themselves skilfully and solidly, and were fruitful and multiplied. In the '40s their numbers had been estimated at about 270,000. In 1910 they were given at 932,416, or 4.40 per cent of the total population of Hungary. Budapest alone contained 203,681, and in seven other towns they numbered over one quarter of the population. In post-War Hungary this proportion is probably even higher, for although the districts with the densest rural Jewish population were assigned to Czechoslovakia, the proportion of Jews in southern and south-eastern Hungary, allotted respectively to Yugoslavia and Roumania, was

below that of the central districts left with Hungary, which retained, of course, the stronghold of Budapest.

These figures show that a large immigration must have taken place, for although the figure of 270,000 was probably an underestimate—Jews have never, since Biblical days, been easy to number—the same remark probably applies also to the more modern figures. Large numbers of Jews certainly entered Hungary, with or without permission from the authorities, from Poland, the Bukovina and Roumania, and from Russia itself, particularly when the great anti-Semitic movements began in Russia and Roumania. It is characteristic of the Jew that he advances step by step, keeping where possible among his kin (who habitually welcome new arrivals with unrivalled generosity and racial solidarity) and pushing forward to exposed outposts only under the pressure of great necessity. Thanks to this national habit, it is quite easy to trace on a map the main lines of the Jewish migration, as it moves slowly from the Carpathian passes down the main avenues of communication towards Budapest ; and in Budapest itself the same process could be followed with almost equal accuracy on a large scale map, from the old Orczi palace, situated conveniently near the railway stations, which serves them for a nucleus and a self-created substitute for a ghetto (Pest, a modern city, never possessed a ghetto in the legal sense of the word) out towards the richer quarters of which they took possession, one by one, as their affairs prospered.

The curious traveller who followed these routes out—it would be an interesting occupation for a holiday—would mark, not only the gradual advance of Jewry into the heart of Christendom, but equally its slow but regular transformation. In the mountain villages, and in that part of Budapest where the

immigrants first pitch their tents on arrival, the aspect of the Jews is almost Biblical: the fur cap, the long black gabardine, the curled ringlets shaking above the ears, testify to a faith undiminished, a social outlook unaltered since the Middle Ages.

Fifty miles out into the plain, half a mile along the streets of Pest, a subtle transformation has already begun. The orthodox cap has given place to an ancient bowler or trilby, still of the orthodox black, still worn as no Gentile wears it, but yet bearing the unmistakable signs of a coy approach towards the less conspicuous fashions of Christendom. The ritual ringlet has degenerated into a whisker, half-heartedly curled, just enough to avoid the censure of the rabbi without infallibly attracting the mockery of the street urchin. A long black overcoat compromises with the gabardine. The pure Yiddish has become a mongrel Magyar dialect, interspersed with strange words and spoken in a strong accent.

Finally, in the banks and business houses and even in some of the aristocratic palaces of the capital, the finished product sits enthroned. Ghetto and synagogue have been left behind. Every trace of origin has been carefully eliminated, down to the name, which has been replaced by some pronouncedly patriotic title such as *Árpád*. All that remains is the business aptitude (and there are even a few who voluntarily go in for ostentation and waste, to show themselves more Magyar than the Magyars), and that undefinable something in the profile which a west European may fail altogether to observe, although the trained Hungarian eye is less easily hoodwinked.

Thus one may trace not only the physical advance of the Jews into Hungary, but also their spiritual approach. The Jews were, with very few exceptions,

active and even ardent Hungarian patriots. They worked hard for the financial and economic development of Hungary, and their press, which soon became the dominating factor in Hungarian public opinion, was always ready to support the claims of Hungary, whether against Austria or against the outer world, while at home it became the willing servant of the official policy, both social and national. The claims of Magyarization were nowhere pressed with such uncontrolled vehemence as in the columns of papers owned, edited, and written entirely by Jews.

As regards the extent to which this spiritual alliance should be followed by actual assimilation of the Jews themselves, opinions varied. A considerable number abjured their origin altogether, received baptism, and took Magyar names. Towards the end of the century there was an annual average of some four to five thousand baptisms, mostly into the Catholic Church. In addition, the children of the mixed marriages, which became legal after 1895, were usually brought up as Christians. Among those who remained true to their religion, a large party, the so-called "Neologs", favoured the most complete assimilation, short of religious conversion, while the Orthodox party insisted on more strict observance of the old ways. In 1906 a formal split occurred between these two parties, and thereafter Hungary became the only country in the world with two official Jewish confessions. Finally, in the highlands of Slovakia, the Chassidim, known themselves also as the "Gute Jidden", carried on their obscure and self-contained existence. Few of these, however, were to be found far from Galicia, their spiritual home, although a small colony was settled in Pest.¹

¹ The Chassidim are a sect founded in the seventeenth century by Israel ben Eliazar, of Miedzyboz, Podolia, famed as a worker of miracles

Feeling on the other side was, perhaps, equally mixed. Hungary's official policy towards the Jews was always liberal. Kálmán Tisza protected them consistently, and when the magnates refused to elect Jews *ex officio* as representatives of their religion in the Upper House, he prevailed upon Francis Joseph to nominate two members. Tisza is said to have encouraged the Jews particularly because he saw that the Magyars needed an ally for their commercial and industrial life, and thought the Jews politically preferable for that purpose to the Swabians. Official policy placed no barrier against the Jewish advance up to the end of the War. Jews were even admitted, in not inconsiderable numbers to such professions as those of army officers and university professors.

Socially, relations were somewhat less happy. Clerical anti-Semitism, led by the Catholic Church (the Protestants were more liberal in this respect), was powerful, and a certain hostility born of social and economic motives was not lacking. The poorer gentry, in particular, who saw their estates and incomes pass into Jewish hands, would not have been human had they not resented this fact; the same is true of the Swabian townspeople. The main force of anti-Semitism was always drawn from these two classes. The magnates, until recent years, were still

through the name of God and known as the Baal Shem Tob (Master of the Good Name). They do not differ from the orthodox Jews in dogma, and accept the authority of the Talmud, but consider a fervid faith to be of greater importance than Talmudic learning. They have their own synagogues and ritual. They revere the Zaddik, or Miracle Rabbis, of whom they acknowledge three hereditary dynasties, the heads of which can, they believe, mediate with God for a consideration. They believe that by violent physical excitement they can enter into direct communication with God and influence Him, and therefore periodically work themselves up into ecstasy by shouting, singing, and gesticulation. For a fascinating description of a Chassidic community, see Jerome and Jean Thauraud's novel, *Un Royaume de Dieu* (Paris, 1920). There are also a few Karaite Jews, mainly in Gyulafehérvár, Transylvania.

so secure in their position and their incomes that they could look on the Jews with that benevolent and contemptuous patronage which was the traditional relationship between the two classes. On the whole, however, the Magyars respected the Jews, and made use of them, perhaps rather more than they liked them. Every Magyar knows a Jew, whether baptized or not, and baptized Jews are not, as a rule, willingly admitted into society, except in unusually liberal circles ; still less the unbaptized, who continue to live a life apart. It is significant that although the children of baptized Jews, and of mixed marriages, are normally brought up as Christians, they frequently, perhaps usually, marry back into Jewish families.

Active anti-Semitism was rare before the War. There was one notorious outbreak, which ran to extremes, as everything in Hungary tends to do. In 1880 a Deputy of the name of Istoczy founded no less than seventy-eight openly anti-Semitic associations. There were soon fairly widespread riots, chiefly directed against the Jewish bankers and money-lenders, who were exploiting the difficulties of the agriculturalists, rich and poor—it has to be admitted that they showed little social sense, and were the cause, necessary or unnecessary, of widespread misery. Several counties petitioned against the admission of further Oriental Jews—a demand usually pressed with equal vigour by the older-established Jewish communities themselves. In 1882 an extraordinary and shameful “ritual murder” case occurred in the village of Tisza-Eszlar. The acquittal of the defendant was followed the next year by violent riots. These were, however, condemned both by the Government and the Church authorities, and the excitement gradually died down.

It flared up again with much greater intensity

after the War. During the War itself the Jews had been widely accused of profiteering, and incurred a good deal of unpopularity. Still more important was the part played by them in the subsequent revolution. Contrary to the current belief, the Jews are on the whole an impoverished community, and they constituted a high proportion of the needy intellectual class whence revolutionists usually spring. It was, moreover, natural that they should fail to share the intense respect for the traditional Magyar form of society which often keeps the penniless Magyar of noble origin a devotee of a social and political system which has no place for him as a man. Jews had long been prominent among the leaders of the Socialist movement, and supplied most of the active figures of the revolution—95 per cent, according to Jászi,¹ including Kun himself, Pogány, Kunfi, Agoston, "Corvin," the real head of the political police, and the bestial terrorist Tibor Szamuély.

Already during the revolutionary period anti-Jewish feeling gained ground rapidly, and when the reaction came in, a terrible revenge was taken upon the Jews. The grievance against them was not merely the part which individual leaders had taken in the revolutionary Government, horrible as that part had sometimes been; it was also the accusation—similar to that levied by Hitler against the German Jews a dozen years later—that by their anti-national policy they had contributed to the downfall of Hungary. To this was added all the pent-up fury of the peasant against the man who bought his harvest cheap and lent him money dear; of the townsman who saw in the Jewish middleman the profiteer who held up supplies and drove up

¹ *Magyariens Schuld, Ungarns Sühne*, p. 128.

prices ; of the middle-class man who saw himself edged out of his job and reduced to misery by superior Jewish adroitness and solidarity. The White Terror carried out principally by the officers' bands led by Pronay, Hejjas, Count Salm, and others, and tolerated for years by the official representatives of authority in Hungary, was almost as indiscriminating as it was ferocious, and it is quite certain that under it there perished many Jews who were either entirely innocent of any offence, or had committed, at worst, nothing more than should have been punished by a few weeks' imprisonment.

The terror was long in dying out. Long after the first reactionary fever was over there were isolated outbursts. To-day, however, both Christians and Jews will tell you that things have "returned to normal". Outrages have ceased, and there is little active anti-Semitism. The spate of applications for baptism and Magyar names has dwindled back to the normal trickle. There are occasional outbursts among the students, which the Government represses. There are two small extreme National Socialist parties, one founded in 1923 by M. Meskó, who quarrel bitterly between themselves and are not taken very seriously by the outside world. When the Hitler disease broke out in Germany, most Hungarians smiled tolerantly and remarked that they had been through all that years ago. The advent to power of General Gömbös, in 1932, caused, it is true, great uneasiness in Jewish circles, for Gömbös had been one of the most dreaded anti-Semites of a few years previously ; but at an early opportunity he publicly abjured his past and promised to treat the Jews with justice and tolerance—a promise which he has kept very faithfully. Indeed, the almost unprecedented event occurs to-day fairly frequently

that the law against " agitation against a confession " is applied against those who agitate against Jews.

Nevertheless, the events of a few years back have left their mark. In Hungary, I have not found the Jews and Christians speak to me against one another with such bitterness as in Roumania, or in Galicia, or, of course, in recent Germany. But excepting a very few completely assimilated Jews, I doubt whether in his deepest heart any Hungarian Jew really likes the Magyars as a race, or any Magyar the Jews. They have come into too close competition to-day, and competitors seldom love each other very well.

Although active anti-Semitism has been put down, the Jews enjoy on the whole less liberty and equality than they did before 1918. This is due largely to economic causes. The extreme urgency of finding careers for the coming generation in impoverished Hungary has naturally suggested the solution of excluding the Jews. The proportion of Jews admitted to-day to be teachers, judges, civil servants, and officers is certainly much lower than it was before the Communist period, and even admission to the universities, which is the indispensable preliminary to a career as a higher State servant, is regulated by the famous "*numerus clausus*" law which has reduced the proportion of Jewish students to far below what it had previously been, if it is still above their proportion of the total population.¹ An interesting result of this is that the Jews are naturally driven ever more into commerce, finance, industry, and the free professions. Up to about 1925, 58 per cent. of all students entering a university did so with the sole object of entering the State service, while 42 per cent. were preparing for free

¹ Of the 2,000-2,500 students who annually leave the universities with degrees, about 250 are Jews.

professions. To-day (1934) no less than 74 per cent. of the students aim at State service, practically all of these being Magyars. Of the remaining 26 per cent. well over half are Jews. Whether the result of this will not be that the Jews will come not only to possess practically the whole wealth of Hungary, but also to mould its culture almost exclusively, is a question which a future generation will have to face very seriously.

The balance of wealth has already tilted very heavily to their side. With the fall in agricultural prices, ownership of land is rapidly becoming more of a burden than an asset. It is, at any rate, much more agreeable, and less hard work, to receive mortgages than to pay them. The salaries of the State employees, never high, have been ruthlessly reduced, and such wealth as remains in Hungary belongs almost exclusively to the bankers and industrialists. Among these there have been a goodly number of crashes, but many have kept their heads above water and even prospered under modern conditions. Tenderly as the big agricultural interests are treated, it is the banks that are becoming, more and more, the real masters of Hungarian economy. It is known, of course, that certain great Budapest banks, notably the Commercial Bank, own an enormous amount of Hungarian industry; a situation which is in part the inheritance of the inflation and loan period after the War. If the full figures were revealed, it would probably be found that their agricultural holdings are little less extensive. It will be far less easy—if the experiment is ever tried—to root out the Jews than it was to assimilate the Swabians.

The Jewish community as a whole continues to give loyal devotion to the Magyar cause. In 1919 the Jews in the areas claimed by the Successor

States generally took the Magyar side, and if some of them have since (under considerable pressure) made terms with their new masters, a handsome fraction still remain true to the Magyar idea. Within Hungary the richer Jews and many of the intellectuals champion the cause of the "nation" with a fervour which outdoes that of the Magyars themselves; and the Government of the day has no more vocal satellites than the Jewish press. If the poorer class of intellectuals are prominent in such opposition as exists, this is often due to no lack of patriotism, but only to a different conception of the ideal Hungary.

The Hungarian Jews to-day bring to the national culture much that is valuable. They are prominent in Hungarian literature, arts, and learning, which by their talents they have done much to adorn. Their nature and training endows them with certain broad and cosmopolitan characteristics often lacking in the native Magyar, and when they allow these qualities free play, the result is one of singular charm and refinement. They are less happily inspired when, as sometimes happens, they choose to imitate the salient Magyar traits, for the imitation degenerates too easily into unintentional caricature.

THE PEASANTS

The Hungarian peasant and agricultural labourer is the complement of the Hungarian magnate and country gentleman. It is useless to own fields if no one is there to till them, or to expect either rent or wages unless someone else pays them. The fortunes of the two parties are indissolubly connected, and if the landowners form the type and quintessence of the Hungarian "nation", the peasants represent the indispensable substratum without which the "nation" could not exist. Yet although throughout her history predominantly a peasant country, Hungary has never once been ruled by her peasantry; rarely with them; almost always against them—sometimes with oppression, sometimes with slow and sullen concessions, occasionally with real outbursts of generosity; but never with admission of their equality. They have always been regarded as inferior, economically and socially. The legal differentiation which existed for so many centuries has vanished, but the gentleman and the peasant still look upon each other as belonging to different orders of beings; and with justice, for modern conditions have even accentuated the differences between them. While the Hungarian upper and middle classes have assimilated the general cosmopolitan culture which is much the same all the modernized world over, the peasant still remains obstinately true to his native influence—a curious air in which three distinct elements can easily be traced: the primeval peasant culture of Central and South-Eastern Europe, with its folklore and traditions, its obscure cults of earth-worship, which are more or less identical from Slovakia to the

Morea, from Moldavia to Albania ; the warm and sunny South Germanic current spreading from the Vosges and the Rhineland through Bavaria and down the Danube Valley past Salzburg, Linz, and Steyr and Vienna, down to Sopron and Pápa and Buda ; and the wild, oriental strain of the steppe which is dominant in the Alföld—yet all three blending in a unique and unmistakable atmosphere which is the quintessence of Hungary.

Popular education, the cinema and, above all, the motor-car are doing much to break down the old isolation in which every peasant community used to live ; but even to-day there are many villages which lie well aside from metalled roads, where communication, except in summer drought or over frozen snow, is only possible for the light peasant carts, drawn by the wiry Hungarian horses, and may be cut off altogether for weeks at a time by the spring and autumn rains. The life of such an isolated village is a very narrow one, particularly as the Magyar has not the German's passion for clubs and associations, and authority, whether of the State or the landlord, has done little to encourage communal life. The village Church and the village inn suffice for most of their needs, and the circle of their interests is but little wider than the performance of their day-to-day tasks, the satisfaction of their immediate needs.

Over a third of the peasant population do not even live in villages at all, but in the isolated settlements known as *tanyas*. The *tanya* is a curious phenomenon of the great Hungarian plain (outside the Alföld it is found much less frequently). The scattered farm system in England, and some other European countries, is due to the taste of the inhabitants, and to the comparative security which made it possible to indulge that taste. In Hungary it is

the result of exactly the opposite conditions. The village is the form of settlement natural to the Magyars and to all other races of Hungary, except possibly some of the Roumanian mountaineers. Under the stress of the Turkish danger, however, the inhabitants of the plain were forced to congregate in enormous settlements, twenty, forty, or sixty thousand strong, whose land stretched out for many leagues round. As it was impossible for those peasants whose lands lay furthest from the village to journey out daily to cultivate them, they built little huts on their fields, and would pass the summer in the huts, the winter in the family house in Szeged or Debreczen. But when the Turkish danger disappeared, and as cattle-breeding gave place more and more to agriculture, the *tanya* developed into the farm, the regular habitation of the family, the cottage in town was abandoned altogether, or where it was retained—and many peasant families, even to-day, still possess their town and their country cottage—it was used chiefly as a home for the old and the very young, while the working generation made use of it, at the most, on market days.

Life in the *tanya* is very solitary. The difficulty of keeping up sufficient communication, across the sandy Alföld, to link all these scattered houses with the outer world, is practically insuperable. It is almost impossible to provide either schools within the reach of all the children of these districts, or medical and other services for the adults. The *tanya* population has, perforce, been left very largely to its own devices, and the districts where this form of settlement prevailed remained among the most backward of all those in the old Hungary, although they were also among its most purely Magyar parts. Trianon Hungary, which contains

most of them, has made great efforts to open them up. Count Klebelsberg, the late Minister of Education, built hundreds of new schools; but until Hungary becomes rich enough to keep up a far denser system of communications, the gulf between the peasant and the townsman can hardly be bridged, and they will regard one another with that mutual incomprehension which so easily breeds mutual hostility.

Descendant of the warrior horsemen of old, the Magyar peasant is prouder, less docile, more generous, less thrifty, and also less hard-working than the German, French, or Slav. With these reservations, however, his is a typical peasant mentality. Like all peasants, he is dour, hard, and mistrustful. Mistrustful above all, and with reason, for his history has been a dismal one. "*Misera contribuens plebs*," as Verböczy pithily described him. Yes, misery has long been his lot, and contributions his portion. The medieval system in Hungary was no more inequitable than the ordinary. The peasant provided the material wherewithal for the community, the nobleman saw to the defence. But the nobles were factious and oppressive, and the Turk threatened them in overwhelming force. In a desperate hour, the peasants were given arms and told to go out, in Christendom's name, against the paynim. Instead, they turned against their lords, burning and slaying, and it took fierce fighting before they were crushed and their leaders tortured to death with a brutality almost too hideous to describe.

That was a day little less disastrous for Hungary than the day of Mohács, which it preceded only by a few years—the national catastrophe following chronologically and morally upon the social.

"That all times may know," decreed the Diet

of 1514, after the rising had been put down, " what a heinous crime it is to rebel against one's masters, all peasants in the realm (except those who dwell in the Royal Free Cities, and those who remained true to their masters and to the Holy Crown) do henceforth lose their liberty of movement and are henceforth subjected to their masters in true and perpetual serfdom." Dues and obligations were imposed which made the lot of those called upon to perform them scarcely distinguishable from slavery. Certain of the harsher orders of 1514 were repealed soon after, but others followed, so that, in the opinion of competent historians, the position of the peasants deteriorated, rather than improved, during the next 300 years. By the end of the eighteenth century the list of obligations had grown too long to be counted, certainly too long to be detailed in full here. All the three main taxes were paid exclusively by the peasants ; these were the " military contribution " to the Crown ; the "*cassa domestica*" to the County, out of which came the pay of the County officials and police, the upkeep of roads and prisons, etc. ; and the "*imposita*", an additional tax imposed by the County assessors for their own pay. Further, the peasant had to deliver whatever was needed by the troops quartered in the County, to carry out, free of charge, all public works which the County decreed, to cart salt as required, and to supply horses when needed by the King's officials. To the Church he paid tithe, to his landlord the rent, house-tax, the ninth part of all his field produce and of his wine, a similar fraction of his poultry and livestock, and an innumerable variety of smaller dues. Above all, he was obliged to do *corvée* for a considerable number of days in the year, to supply oxen and horses, and to send his women to do domestic service.

There were, of course, compensating features. The population being still sparse, most holdings were comparatively large, and the Crown worked diligently to prevent encroachments by landlords on the urbarial land, on which alone taxation could be levied. Some peasants, who were leaseholders in perpetuity of considerable farms, could fairly be called prosperous. A far larger number were little more than their landlord's unpaid servants; but even they were protected to some extent by the prevailing patriarchal relations (in the case of the many good landlords, exceedingly cordial and indulgent), by the natural wealth of the land, and the small part played in the prevailing economy by money. But the problem was not an economic one only. Legally and socially, in all ordinary affairs of day-to-day life the peasant was practically at the mercy of his master, or of the County officials—a body composed exclusively of the local nobility and concerned above all things to protect their own interests and position.

The Diets of the nineteenth century awoke gradually to the need for reform, the process being considerably accelerated by some ugly risings among the peasants in 1831. In 1838 the right of free movement was restored to the agricultural labourer, and he was given the option, if he could make use of it, of compounding his obligations to his landlord for a sum to be fixed by negotiation. In 1843 it was enacted that all native non-nobles belonging to a "received" religion might possess "noble" lands, and might also hold any public office dependent upon nomination and election.

Finally, in 1848 the whole system of previous centuries was swept away at one blow. The political and legal distinctions between different classes of Hungarians vanished altogether; the family entail

of noble property was abolished ; all alike became subject to taxation ; the serf's dues and obligations, including the tithe, were wiped out, and he became owner of his lands in full title. The liberation was not optional, but compulsory ; the compensation to the former owner was paid, not by the peasant but by the State, and even, by a provision rare in history, the legislation was made retroactive, and peasants who had paid their landlords sums for their liberation between 1840 and 1848 received those sums reimbursed.

Moreover, these reforms were not only generous, but enduring, being so embedded in the other legislation of 1848 as to form an inseparable whole with it, and as other parts of that legislation constituted Hungary's charter of liberties against Austria, the social reforms could never be repealed without invalidating the whole structure.

The more well-to-do peasants, who had been roughly in the position of yeomen farmers, were unqualified gainers by the reform. They became full freehold owners of their holdings, subject henceforward only to the ordinary land tax, which, as it was now imposed on all lands alike, was always kept light. From this class there sprang the independent, medium, and large peasants, with holdings of 100 to 200 yokes and more, who ever since have constituted one of the most solid and prosperous of all Hungary's social classes. There are in Hungary, even to-day, peasants who can fairly be described, in view of their needs, as very wealthy men. In 1927, when on a visit to the fat districts south of Pécs, I was taken to see the tail-end of the wedding festivities which celebrated the marriage of one such peasant magnate's daughter. Only in certain pictures of the Flemish school have I ever beheld anything approaching that scene :

in real life never. A thousand guests had been invited, and they were feasted for a week. Pigs and lambs innumerable, and oxen, had been roasted whole. Bread, cakes, pancakes, butter and cheese by the ton had been lavished, and as for the number of casks of wine broached, I certainly could not count them, and I am convinced that none of the guests—it was now the fifth day—was even approximately in a position to do so. In that green and gracious land, surrounded by those evidences of creature comfort beyond the imagination of the poor, urbanized Westerner, thinly nurtured on Argentinian beef and Siberian eggs, one felt that one had strayed into an earthly—a very earthly—paradise.

This class has held its own well during the past century, and has, indeed, largely replaced the less laborious and less canny smaller gentry, as an economic factor. Even socially, the well-to-do peasant distinguishes his position very strongly from that of the dwarf-holder or labourer, and is beginning to climb slowly upwards towards a higher sphere; although the ascent is harder in Hungary than in countries where blood counts for less and money for more. Unfortunately, this class is small. Its holdings never exceeded some 12 to 15 per cent. of the total area of Hungary. The vast majority of the liberated peasants—Deák put their numbers, in 1833, at 700,000—were in an entirely different position. True, they recovered personal liberty, and in some cases a little land, but this was often too small to allow them an existence, while they lost at the same time not only the landlord's protection and patriarchal care, but also many rights and privileges of usufruct of common land or their masters' lands, which had been an essential element in their economy. They could only have been

established as prosperous peasants on the basis of a really thorough land reform, which would have meant cutting deeply into the large estates, and these were left practically untouched, while the distribution made at the expense of the smaller estates only touched the fringe of the problem. The first figures on record gave for Hungary without Transylvania, Croatia, and Slavonia, the total of 22,715 proprietors of less than 5 yokes, 239,692 of between 5 and 10 yokes, 216,984 between 10 and 20, and 65,861 between 20 and 100—the last group representing roughly the more prosperous peasant class to which reference has already been made.¹

While a few other estates may have been partitioned after the date of these figures, any further reform on a large scale was effectively barred by the progressive consolidation of the large estates by means of inalienable entails. In 1900, 1,358,857 or 55·20 per cent. of the total landowners of Hungary occupied plots of 1 to 5 yokes, another 1,051,045 had holdings of 5 to 10 yokes; and besides this great army of dwarf-holders, there was also a large and increasing proletariat which was always landless. Meanwhile the political supremacy of the big landlords was ensured by the franchise system and the administration. The agrarian policy of the country was conducted entirely in their interests, and their cardinal object was to ensure for themselves a cheap and docile supply of free labour, in the pursuance of which aim not a few of them even discouraged the industrial development of Hungary, as tending to draw labour away from the country into the towns. For a certain period after the Compromise, the rapid development of the towns, Budapest in particular, the construction of the

¹ Baron G. H. von Tornyay, *Die Bodenreform und ihr Einfluss auf die Entwicklung der ungarischen Landwirtschaft* (Budapest, 1926).

railways, and the regulations of the Tisza (by which, incidentally, a large new area of 6·5 million yokes was made available for cultivation) gave rise to a demand for labour which put the landless population in a comparatively favourable position. Gradually, however, the tempo of development slowed down, the pressure of population increased, and the dwarf-holders and labourers found themselves back in very much the same position as before the reforms. Even the *corvée* or "robot" returned, if under another name. The most usual form was, at first, to insert in a labourer's contract a clause that his womenfolk should do one or two days' service a week in the landlord's house. In other cases he would lease a plot against either a money rent, a share of yield in kind, or a certain number of days' service, amounting sometimes to sixty or seventy in the year, or a combination of all three. While sometimes a necessary and even a humane adaptation of the system of rent in cash alone, current in countries where money circulates more freely, this yet caused much ill-feeling, and although the element of legal compulsion was absent, yet in view of the economic helplessness of one of the parties concerned, talk of liberty of contract was often a mere pretence.

Even the pretence was not very carefully kept up in every case, particularly at a time when agrarian unrest was rife, and harvesters' strikes frequent. This famous instrument was known officially as Law II of 1898,¹ "on the regulations of the legal relationship between employer and agricultural labourer," but more simply, to its opponents, as the "Slavery Act". It was enacted, as the preamble states, "to secure the undisturbed execution of agricultural labour," and made the contracts of

¹ It was based on an earlier, but much less stringent law of 1876.

agricultural labourers and day labourers an official obligation, which was undertaken before the authorities, and, once made, could not be broken, except in case of sickness, military service, or danger to life. A worker not appearing voluntarily at his work, failing to begin work, or failing to bring the implements, etc., stipulated in the contract, became liable to two months' imprisonment. He might be escorted back to his work by gendarmes. Further, at the same time, all combinations among agricultural workers were declared null and void, and it became a punishable offence to address, attend, or hire rooms for, a meeting for the purpose of inciting agricultural workers to form a trade union. Any person abetting a strike became liable to a fine not exceeding 400 gold crowns (to be paid within forty-eight hours), and to imprisonment up to sixty days. In return, the truck system was abolished, and certain welfare measures made incumbent on the employer.

This law was supplemented by similar acts relating to forest workers, tobacco workers, market gardeners, etc.

Material conditions were also extremely miserable. In 1893 the average summer wage for an adult male was 176 fillér (about 1s. 6d.), the winter wage about half that figure. A woman's wage was about two-thirds of a man's, a child's about half.¹ Nominal wages rose by some 30 per cent up to 1913, but this increase was largely set off by the simultaneous rise in the cost of living and by the reduction in the number of days worked, owing to the increased use of machinery. As a rule, only casual labour was ever available during the winter months, and the

¹ See tables in G. Schutz, *La Situation Matérielle des classes laborieuses en Hongrie avant la Guerre*, pp. 19 ff. These figures do not include either food or lodging.

average labourer did no more than seventy to ninety days' work in the year. On the other hand, the working day at harvest time ranged from twelve to twenty hours. Official inquiries showed that for a good half of the year this large class of the population lived in a state of privation bordering on starvation. In many Counties meat was "practically unknown", in some bread, even unleavened bread, was a rarity. There were epidemics of hunger typhus and pellagra and several cases of madness induced by starvation.

One consequence of these deplorable conditions was the steady stream of emigration which began about 1870, but reached its highest point in the twentieth century. The first regions to be affected by this were the mountains of the present Slovakia, and the first emigrants were mostly Slovaks. Then came the west, then the south, the east, and finally the centre. Although absolutely complete statistics are not available, Hungary probably lost nearly 1,500,000 citizens to the U.S.A. alone, while minor currents of emigration led to Roumania, Serbia, and Austria. This emigration was, incidentally, not without its effect on the mixed racial question. The number of Slovaks emigrating to the U.S.A. alone exceeded that of the Magyars, while the number of Croats was little below it. Emigration was also high among the Ruthenes. Thus the general trend of the figures was to increase the proportion of the Magyars to the other races of Hungary.

It is not surprising that political unrest should have manifested itself. As early as 1869 we hear of "agitation against the established order,"¹ but the movement only really gained ground towards the end of the '80s, when the public works began to fall off and labour was forced back into agriculture.

¹ Schutz, p. 24.

In 1890 two or three delegates of the agricultural labourers attended the Congress of the newly founded Social Democrat party. The authorities took the severest repressive measures, but in 1891 and again in 1894 there were demonstrations which the military dispersed with considerable bloodshed. It is noteworthy that the centres of the unrest, with hardly an exception, were in the Magyar districts of the Alföld. In 1896 a Socialist in Budapest named István Varkonyi, having quarrelled with the Social Democrat party, betook himself into the country, where he founded a new party of "Independent Socialists", and began an agitation in favour of communization of the land. Varkonyi was a strange character, in whose doctrines anarchism, communism, a sort of mystic religion and class hatred were curiously mixed, and they worked like fire on the peasantry. The orthodox Socialists redoubled their efforts, to keep such hold as they had won over the agricultural labourers. In 1896 and 1897 both fractions held congresses, and at harvest time a strike of harvest labourers broke out.

The landowners were not in a position to face the situation and the strike had, materially, considerable success. Harvest wages were forced up by 40-50 per cent. and the "robot" labour abolished in a number of communes. On the other hand, the police and army took drastic action, in a whole series of "battles" in which much blood flowed. The movement was, however, not to be repressed. In the same year the Germans of the Banat organized, and in the following spring there was widespread unrest in the northern portion of the Alföld. It was fanned by Varkonyi's followers, and fearful rumours of a new peasant revolt ran through Hungary. The authorities, however, repressed it in their usual drastic way, dissolved Varkonyi's party, and seized

the opportunity to take severe measures against his opponents, the Social Democrats.

The anarchist movement was duly crushed, but Socialism continued to spread, partly thanks to the fact that the police had expelled many of the Social Democrat leaders from Budapest, thus providing the country with a network of agitators. The movement, which was still strongest in Central Hungary, gained many followers, not only among the labourers, but also among many small holders. Its adherents were not very orthodox Socialists, and chiefly interested in such questions as the regulation of hours of work, the abolition of unpaid labour, prohibition of child labour, etc. Their demands sufficed, however, to alarm the landlords, and to evoke strong measures from the Government, including the Law of 1898 described above, and its supplementary Acts. Strikes and sabotage of labour, however, continued, culminating in 1905 and 1906, when there were regular risings. The Government did its best to help the landlords. A reserve army of harvest labourers from the even more poverty-stricken districts of the north was formed, and there was talk of using contract labour, and of importing workers from abroad. It is fair to add that some efforts were also made to improve conditions of labour by the introduction of a primitive form of sickness and accident insurance (nearly all the costs of which, however, fell upon the workers), while considerable benefits were brought to some persons through a co-operative movement started by Count Sándor Károlyi. Efforts were even made, in several years, to carry through a scheme of "agrarian colonization", but although the plans were extensive, the results were almost negligible.

After agrarian socialism had been put down, the peasants remained practically without a leader—

that is, the small men; for the interests of the rich peasants agreed substantially with those of the big landlords, and were adequately represented in such bodies as the Christian Social Party—a body which in Hungary has retained a predominantly clerical and conservative outlook. During the War, a small group of small holders was organized, under a very talented peasant leader, Szabó of Nagytád, but the revolutionary force acquired by the peasant parties in other countries during this period was nullified in Hungary by the national question, on which most of the peasant masses of the non-Magyar districts united with the bourgeois democrats; although even here the question of land reform played an important part, for Serbia was a country of peasant proprietors, Roumania, where conditions had been fully as bad as in Hungary, hurriedly carried through a reform in 1917, and the Czech movement was entirely democratic. The discontent of the peasants and small landowners was, however, a powerful element in bringing about the success of the October Revolution of 1918, whose leaders had long preached the necessity both for a repartition of the big estates and for a democratization of Hungary's political institutions. The measures taken by the Hungarian Government in the War had been confined to the allocation of some thousands of yokes to ex-soldiers, under a decree passed in 1917, which allowed the State a right of control over the sale of agricultural properties, first in the territories threatened by invasion, and afterwards over all Hungary, and gave it a pre-emptive right over real property for sale, in the interests of the fighting forces. This measure was directed not against the former landowners, but against speculators, mainly of the Jewish persuasion, who were taking advantage of the occasion to buy up cheap

holdings whose owners had been called to the colours, or otherwise embarrassed.

When Károlyi took over the power, the peasants awaited a radical redistribution of land, but next to nothing was done. Károlyi himself and the other chief figures in the Cabinet were almost entirely occupied with foreign policy, with negotiations with the Entente, with the new Successor States, with the nationalities. The Government contained no single peasant leader of any authority, and the Socialists were actually opposed to distribution of land, both on economic grounds and fearing that they would increase the number of small proprietors hostile to Socialism and to the towns. It must be remembered that at this period of extreme privation and food shortage the interest of even the smallest peasant producer was more opposed to that of the urban consumer than it was to that of the greatest feudal magnate, as the experience of Austria, of Bulgaria, and of other countries proved.

The Minister of Agriculture, Barnabas Buza, fearing that this attitude would lead the rural population to turn against the revolution altogether, issued, apparently on his own authority, a decree (Popular Law XVIII of 1919) proclaiming that all properties exceeding 200 yokes might be expropriated, at the 1913 price, either for building purposes or to form small properties of 1 to 20 yokes. "Committees for Land Distribution" were set up and began work at the end of February, 1913, Károlyi himself leading the way by giving up one of his own estates for division. The landowning classes were at the moment entirely terrorized. The lay owners held their peace and the bishops even offered their land. But the Social Democrats opposed the measure, and checked it by raising the

wages for agricultural labour to such heights as to make it obviously more profitable to be a labourer than a small holder. Between the conflicting policies the Government wavered, and Buza's move came too late. In March, Kun came into power, and promptly stopped the distribution in favour of his own plan of turning all properties of more than 100 yokes into "producers' co-operatives", in which the only change from the old system was that the State, and not the owner, paid the wage-bill. In a moment of rash enthusiasm, he announced that this was only a first step: the turn of the small properties would come next. Production promptly fell off, the Communist Government was obliged to requisition the supplies, which it did in ruthless fashion. The peasants retaliated, and town and country were practically at war.

The result of this naïve policy was that when the Counter-Revolution came in, it was actually supported by the large majority of the peasants; the more so as it promised release from the hated Roumanian occupation. The White Terror took drastic measures against those small peasants and labourers who had taken a prominent part in the campaign against the landlords. Nevertheless, in the elections of 1920, which were held by secret ballot, the Small Holders' Party, led by Szabó, was the second strongest party in the Constituent Assembly, with forty-nine members, and joined the Government, Szabó himself becoming Minister for Agriculture. In the autumn of 1920 Szabó introduced an Agrarian Reform Bill, which was duly adopted, on 7th December, as Law XXXVI of 1920.

This Law,¹ which constitutes Hungary's contribution to Agrarian Reform, was a modest instrument

¹ This section is based on an excellent small work, *Birtokpolitika és Földreform*, by Károly Schandl (Budapest, 1927).

compared to similar measures enacted in neighbouring countries. The State was empowered to acquire "the real property necessary for the agrarian reform", as far as possible by agreement, by auction, or by right of pre-emption, although it could, if necessary, requisition land by compulsion. Only certain categories of properties were, however, subject to requisition. Properties acquired by one living person from another between 28th July, 1914, and 7th December, 1920 (from the outbreak of the War to the enactment of the Law); properties belonging to certain classes of public undertakings; properties the owner of which has been convicted of an offence against the State, or desertion, might be requisitioned in their entirety. There were, however, numerous exemptions from the third of these categories, including small properties and properties acquired by near relatives of the previous owner, and the Court might refrain from carrying through the expropriation if it were shown that the new owner had acquired his property in honourable fashion, free from the taint of profiteering, and if he was a peasant, war invalid, civil servant, or soldier, or had sold his old family property to acquire the new one. Other exemptions were allowed on more purely economic grounds.

Secondly, the State might requisition from any large estate as much as could be taken without damaging the rest of the estate, or in its entirety, an estate purchased in such a manner that the right of pre-emption might have been exercised against it. Small and medium properties could not be requisitioned, except in case of absolute necessity to the successful execution of the distribution. Building plots could, however, be requisitioned from any property, however small, but equivalent compensation in land had to be given. Numerous

categories of large estates were exempted from requisition, including estates belonging to the monastic orders which maintained secondary schools.

No requisitions could be made after 7th December, 1925.

The land so acquired was distributed to certain selected categories of claimants, in the following order:—

1. War invalids, widows, and adult orphans: a building site and a plot of 3 yokes, if they were agriculturists.

2. Independent and adult agricultural labourers: a maximum of 3 yokes and a building site if they possess neither a house nor a site.

3. Small and dwarf holders: additional land to bring their holdings up to the local average, not to exceed 15 yokes.

4. Public servants, small industrials, and industrial labourers, if landless: 1 yoke.

5. Retired civil servants and officers: a property equal to the value of their pensions on commutation.

6. Communes, co-operative societies, etc.: the area needed by them to make communal grazing grounds.

7. Skilled agriculturalists: the land necessary for the creation of model farms.

Other things being equal, holders of war decorations and heads of large families received priority.

The following persons were debarred from benefiting by the reform:—

1. Persons not Hungarian nationals.

2. Lunatics.

3. Persons condemned to loss of civil rights.

4. Bankrupts.

5. Deserters.

6. Persons judged unworthy to receive land on account either of conviction for an offence committed

against the State, or for motives of greed, or of having adopted during the revolutionary period an attitude dangerous to the State and the social order.

7. Persons in conflict with the dispositions of the agrarian law, particularly those occupying land by *force majeure*.

The execution of the law was entrusted to an independent Tribunal appointed by the head of the State, on the proposal of the Government, from a list nominated by the High Courts, the Chamber of Agriculture, the non-profit-earning co-operatives, and the competent Ministries. Where land was requisitioned (the only case of practical interest, since very little was acquired by any other method) an assessor from this tribunal proceeded to the spot, and there convoked a Commission composed as a rule of the representatives of the party at whose expense the process was being carried out, of the claimants to land, of the Ministry of Agriculture, and of the local authorities. The demarcation and allocation of the land and the fixing of the sum to be paid in compensation were settled, where possible, by agreement, but in the last instance by the Courts of the Tribunal. The compensation was paid by the recipient to the State, and by the State to the former owner. A point to which Hungarian writers refer with pride is that the full price was paid to all recipients of compensation, whereas in the neighbouring countries, where the agrarian reform was carried out in part with the political object of weakening the position of the Magyar landowners, the compensation received by the latter was far below the real value of the land. Another point where the State showed itself considerate to the suffering landlords was that the compensation was, in many instances at least,

paid immediately, whereas the payments were only collected by instalments from the beneficiaries.

Indeed, a cursory glance at the provisions of this Law show it to be possessed of an elasticity which distinguishes it sharply from most measures of "agrarian reforms". Except in a very few passages, it eschews the rigid bondage of figures. No property, however large, need necessarily suffer under it, unless its owner has put himself into certain moral or racial categories of delinquency, nor need any dwarf holder or labourer, however miserable, necessarily profit, unless he shows himself possessed of certain moral qualities. In its combination of national and personal considerations, in its subordination of economic to moral factors, in the subtle connections which it imposes between the ownership of land and the support of patriotic and social ideas, it is probably unique.

Practically all operations connected with this law had been concluded by 1927, by which date its effects were summarized as follows :—

The effect of the Treaty of Trianon had not been to alter greatly the relationship between large and small estates. Of the 16·15 million yokes left to Hungary under the Treaty, 8·64, or 53·5 per cent. were medium or large estates (the large estates greatly preponderating), while 7·51, or 46·5 per cent. were small holdings. The State exercised its right of expropriation in respect of 895,707 yokes, which figure included the entire private property of that offender against the State, Count Károlyi. Other offenders against the State and deserters contributed a share, the extent of which is not known to me. In addition, when a capital levy was enacted in 1921, estates of over 1,000 yokes were required to pay this in land, in a proportion ranging from 14–20 per cent. of the total estate. By this means the State acquired

450,000 yokes, which were placed at the disposal of the Tribunal. All in all, a total of about 1,000,000 yokes of agricultural land was obtained, besides some 260,000 building plots, covering a further 55,000 yokes. About one-sixth of the total was allocated to "objects of public utility", such as model farms, agricultural schools, common pastures, endowments for priests, notaries, etc., a rather larger amount was devoted to enlarging existing holdings, and something under 700,000 yokes was distributed in dwarf holdings to rather over 400,000 persons who had previously been landless.

Exact figures for the present distribution of land in Hungary are difficult to obtain. It is stated that 30 per cent. of the land to-day consists of large properties (1,000 yokes and over); 18·3 per cent. of medium properties (100–1,000 yokes), and 51·7 per cent. of small and dwarf holdings (less than 100 yokes).¹ Other writers place the proportion of small holdings somewhat higher, e.g. as high as 53·6 per cent.; and it is pointed out with justice that a number of communes figure in the lists as large proprietors, whereas their land mainly benefits the small holders; the effective small property is thus between 55 and 60 per cent.²

Nevertheless, although the reform has improved conditions in certain respects, it has obviously not yet solved the peasant problem in Hungary. Many of the recipients were not of a class capable of profiting by them; in other cases, the holdings were situated so far from the recipient's domicile as to be almost useless to him. The financial difficulties have been considerable, since the purchase price was calculated at a time before the recent catastrophic fall in agricultural prices, and the

¹ So M. A. Szilágyi, in the *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, November, 1932.

² M. C. Imrig, *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, June, 1933.

State has been obliged to grant a moratorium in respect of most of the payments.

But the most important feature is that the reform still left a very large class of dwarf holders, or of entirely landless persons, whose economic and social position remains catastrophic for themselves, and highly dangerous to the State. A recent article by Dr. Miklós Móricz states that in 1920 the total of independent persons engaged in agriculture (including their families) was 2,300,000; employed persons in agriculture (including their families) numbered 2,200,000. The number of agricultural occupiers had since risen by about 400,000, "but as most of the holdings distributed under the agrarian reform were too small to raise the new owners out of the rank of the employed, it is probable that the ratio in agriculture between independent and employed persons did not change to any great extent between 1920 and 1930."¹ The number of dwarf holders has been put at 912,000,² that of the labourers who are entirely landless at 2,105,000.³ Whatever the exact figures, it is probably fair to state that some three million persons in Hungary are either wholly or mainly dependent on agricultural employment for their livelihood: their status ranging through many intermediate gradations, from that of the small holder who can satisfy a considerable proportion of his needs from his own land, to that of the wholly landless man—farm servant, engaged by contract for at least a year, or "free" agricultural labourer, paid at daily rates, who possesses practically nothing that he can call his own.

It is difficult to give a fair or exact account of

¹ *International Labour Review*, February, 1933.

² The Archduke Albert, *Pester Lloyd*, 30th April, 1933.

³ Deputy Weltner, in Parliament, 2nd June, 1933.

the condition of these workers, owing to the innumerable variations in their position. Many, perhaps as many as one-third of the labourers own their own cottages, with their tiny gardens (in a Hungarian village each cottage is set by itself in a little plot with yard and garden), which enable them to satisfy some of their material needs. Farm servants usually receive free housing. Payment in kind constitutes a high proportion of the takings of many workers, especially of the farm servants and harvest labourers, the latter often being paid almost entirely by a share of the harvest gathered by them, while the former are usually given the use of an acre or so of land, a cow, and one or two pigs, of which the employer keeps the young at his own expense for a certain period, with poultry, firewood, straw, etc. The proportion of wages paid in kind has risen very greatly since the recent depression began. A farmer in the best wheat-growing area of the Alföld estimated, in 1932, the value of the total annual earnings of his farm servants at 1,042 pengö, of which 94 only were in cash. These were, however, favourable rates; the average is probably substantially lower.

It is certain that the agricultural wages which Hungary is able to pay, especially since the depression, are to-day very miserable. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, the daily rates paid to men in 1929 ranged from 4.30 pengö in summer to 2.20 in winter, the rates for women being about two-thirds of this, for children just over half. Either, however, these figures are unduly optimistic (and they have often been criticized), or a further large fall occurred since. In the autumn of 1933 I made inquiries on the spot in several parts of Hungary, from both employers and workers, and the answers agreed that the average summer wage for a man was 1.00-0.80 pengö; for a woman, 0.60-0.50. The

incredible cheapness of purely agricultural produce doubtless makes these pittances go some way; but the price of industrial foods has sunk much less, and the agricultural labourer can hardly hope to lead much more than an animal existence. Nor are the conditions under which he works tempting. Hours are generally from sunrise to sunset. The only statutory regulation is that farm labourers are allowed an hour's break at midday, with two further half-hour breaks in the afternoon. They are also entitled to freedom on Sunday, and the great religious festivals. Against this, the social insurance system has been greatly improved. A complete and modern sickness insurance scheme was recently introduced, and accident insurance is also in force. The law lays down that the employer shall provide his farm servants with healthy dwellings. This stipulation does not cover agricultural labourers, but the housing situation was greatly improved under the Agrarian Reform Act. In spite of the difficulty of comparison, the agricultural poor are probably better and more spaciouly housed in Hungary than in England (except where the new Council houses are available) and much better than in most parts of Ireland. Finally, an important Act was passed in 1923 "respecting the prevention of the unjustifiable exploitation of the labour of agricultural workers", which renders null and void contracts under which the worker is required to work "without adequate special remuneration or without a specified equivalent return", or long-term contracts which allow the employer to dismiss the worker temporarily without suitable compensation in case of temporary shortage of work. The same Act set up Mixed Minimum Wage Boards, which are said to have rendered very useful service.

It would be unfair to ignore the progress which

these measures represent ; but foolish also to assert that they touch more than the fringe of the problem. So long as the political forces in Hungary are so unequally balanced, little real improvement in the lot of the small holder and agricultural labourer can be expected ; while their economic position may well deteriorate even further, thanks to the world agrarian crisis for which Hungary is in no way responsible.

But however unfavourable the conditions of the employed agricultural workers may be (and materially, they probably sound worse than they are) a much greater problem is presented by the unemployed, or partially employed. Full statistics are not available, but according to recent data collected by the Ministry of Agriculture, about 55 per cent. of the agricultural labour class (including dwarf holders) were unemployed in the winter months of 1932-3, and this probably reflects the usual situation fairly accurately. In 1932 it was calculated a labourer was not employed for more than 130 days on the average, or barely 45 per cent. of the possible working time, allowing for Sundays and holidays. In some parts of the country the figure was higher, amounting to 200-220 days in the year ; in others it was as low as 80-100. Even more alarming is the figure of persons who are completely unemployed. Here, again, exact figures are very difficult to give. The Social Democratic Party in Budapest gave the present writer, in July, 1933, the figure of about 600,000 agricultural labourers " suffering from unemployment even during the summer ". This is probably a pretty accurate round figure, although perhaps rather on the high side¹ ; nor does it imply that all of the 600,000 are totally without occasional

¹ An authority from the other camp (the Archduke Albert) put the figure at 250,000 to 500,000 (30th April, 1933).

casual labour, nor even entirely without resources, since many of them possess a vegetable plot. Yet the situation is very serious. Its difficulties have naturally been accelerated by the increased use of agricultural machinery in modern times, and the Government has let it be known that it favours the retention of hand labour, in preference to the use of machinery. In some cases, estates which had introduced machinery have actually gone back to hand labour as being more satisfactory and even cheaper. It is, however, clear that if crops harvested by hand are to compete in the world market with those of the Canadian and Argentinian prairies, the wages paid must be depressed to an almost inconceivable level; while on the other hand, if Hungary keeps her agricultural wages at a decent level, she risks losing her wheat export markets, and if she introduces machinery on a large scale she creates still more agricultural unemployment and thus creates for herself a social problem for which no solution is obvious, since she does not possess the capital to absorb the displaced workers in industry.

The dilemma is a very painful one, and constitutes perhaps the chief problem in Hungary's domestic politics to-day.

It is clear that there is here fuel for a formidable conflagration, if the dispossessed agricultural population ever finds itself in a position to combine.

The Government does not appear to propose any further distribution of the big estates, except possibly on a small scale, by colonizing a certain number of settlers on heavily mortgaged lands, to be taken over from the owners in settlement of tax arrears.¹ Any more drastic plan is opposed by all the weight of organized authority and respectable

¹ In November, 1933, it was stated that the Government was devoting a further 10,000,000 pengő for exercise of its right of pre-emption.

opinion, which is able to point to the fact that many of the beneficiaries from the earlier reform have been in financial difficulties ever since. The labourers and dwarf holders are, however, undoubtedly land-hungry ; but at present their political helplessness equals their economic weakness. The Small Holders' Party was a genuine power in the land for a certain period after the 1920 elections ; but in 1921 Count Bethlen succeeded in persuading it to join the " Party of Unity " and from that time onward it gradually lost influence. Bethlen's pact with the Social Democrats, described elsewhere, deprived the revolutionary element in the villages of much of its force, while the land reform was so conducted as to establish a solid Conservative bloc in the key positions. The most effective step was, however, the reintroduction of open voting in the country districts. Thereafter the vast majority of the Deputies from the country districts became once again the nominees of the landowners and the Church.

Szabó died in 1924 and thereafter the small holders and still more, the labourers, were practically without representation in Parliament for several years, since the " Small Holders' Group " in the Party of Unity dwindled steadily in numbers and influence. A number of small groups and parties existed throughout the country, some of them of rather radical views—from time to time the old phantom of " agrarian socialism " was rumoured to have been seen again, like the *fata Morgana* on the Alföld ; but they were mutually antagonistic, and strictly controlled by the police. From 1929 a certain revival of activity set in. Bálint Sziij, an agricultural labourer who represented his class in the Upper House, gathered round him a small group. Much more important were the followers of Gaston Gaál, a landowner and Deputy, who was able in February, 1931, to found a new party of " independent small

holders and agricultural labourers", with which Szijj's group was merged. The Party put forward a considerable programme, including secret suffrage, a more extensive land reform, reduction of industrial prices (war was declared particularly on the banks and industrial cartels), and simplification, with reduction in costs, of the Government machinery.

The Party never appealed to the more radical elements among the peasants and undoubtedly suffered from the fact that the leaders were largely either intellectuals or even large landowners. Gaál's great energy and moral authority, however, held it together, and in the Elections of 1931 it gained the considerable number of twenty-seven seats. It undoubtedly had many sympathizers in the country districts; a measure of its popularity was the very severe attitude adopted towards it by the authorities. Not even the Social Democrat candidates had to complain of such difficulties as the Small Holders. But in the autumn of 1932 Gaál died suddenly. The leader elected to fill his place, M. Tibor Eckhardt, is one of Hungary's most interesting and brilliant politicians, but hardly seems in his place as a peasants' leader. He is himself a landowner, and played a large part in the stormy post-War years as a colleague of M. Gömbös, and leader of the intransigent anti-Semitic counter-revolutionaries. In many respects his programme is agrarian rather than peasant. That part of it which deals with land reform envisages only that the Government should take over and distribute those portions of the big properties which are heavily indebted, the new owners paying for their acquisitions through the medium of 4 per cent. bonds—a plan not differing greatly from that which the Government has said that it favours. Whether the peasant movement will succeed in holding together and acquiring more strength in the future, remains to be seen.

THE WORKMEN

The industrial workers form the last and least regarded of all social classes in Hungary. These adjectives have been carefully chosen ; for in certain respects the urban proletariat, particularly in Budapest, enjoys to-day both moral and material advantages which the agricultural workers might envy. But like the ill-grown sapling which the woodman's axe spares, they owe their salvation to their very insignificance. The agrarian interests still so powerful in Hungarian politics are primarily concerned to keep their own hold on the country districts unchallenged. If ever they think it advisable, for whatever reason, to make a concession to labour, they vastly prefer that this should be at the expense of the Jewish capitalist, rather than at their own ; for the most satisfactory form of charity is that which begins next door. At the same time, the small and very relative advantages which the industrial workers have snatched from this policy have been largely offset by a price policy mainly devised to protect the agricultural producer.

And while even the farm hands and harvest workers have always had their traditional place, however miserable, in the edifice of Hungarian society, the town workers have had to struggle throughout against conservatism and prejudice which doubted their very right to exist. In the first place, the class, in its present form, is less than a century old. Before 1848 industry in Hungary, except for a primitive type which was more than half agriculture, was practically confined to the Royal Free Cities. The guild masters and apprentices were a small and highly skilled body who took their good time,

earned their good wages, and formed something like an aristocracy of labour. They worked, however, on a very restricted scale, and in a world of their own which had little contact with the general life of Hungary. The growth of the modern industrial proletariat dates only from the emancipation of the peasants and the abolition of the old restrictions after 1848, when a flood of day labourers, harvest workers, and the sons of small peasants and dwarf holders, to whom the new conditions no longer offered even a hope of making a livelihood on the land, poured into the towns in their flight before starvation, swamping the old industrial organization, except in a few highly skilled trades. With the rapid growth of the towns, aided by the extensive public works set in hand by the Hungarian Government after the Compromise, the numbers of the new proletariat grew apace, and have grown still further since the War. Yet they are still only a small fraction of the total population of the country. In 1900 (when industrialization was already far advanced) out of 16,800,000 inhabitants of Hungary only 161,000 were employed in mining, 2,401,000 in industry, and 407,000 in transport, these figures including, besides the workers, the employers and very large numbers of independent artisans. The workers in industrial establishments employing twenty or more hands numbered only 212,000. Even in 1933, out of a population of some 8,000,000 only about one-tenth were employed in mining, industry, and transport together.¹

Nor have they yet succeeded in evolving a definite class psychology. Even to-day, one quarter of the

¹ M. Béla Kovrig, in the *Nouvelle Revue de Hongrie*, January, 1933, calculates 700,000 industrial workers, 90,000-100,000 transport workers, 50,000-55,000 miners. The Hungarian Trade Union Council gave the present writer, in July, 1933, the figure of 550,000-600,000 employed persons in industry.

factory workers in Budapest are the sons of peasants, with a peasant's thoughts and hopes, and most of them dream of returning to the land in their old age. In the unskilled trades the proportion is much higher ; and this is one of the reasons for the lack of unity which often exists between the mass of Hungarian workers and their leaders.

There are also certain further factors which contribute to the scant esteem in which the industrial workers are held by other classes in Hungary (not by the rich alone). The Hungarian of any class leaves the soil reluctantly, and the new proletariat drew its recruits, not from the more intelligent and enterprising of the rural population, but from the flotsam and jetsam, the forlorn and broken who found no other resource to escape starvation on the land. In particular, they were largely composed of the non-Magyar nationalities, partly because the economic pressure was heaviest of all on the poverty-stricken regions of the periphery, and partly because the true Magyar takes very unkindly to the regular hours of factory or mine, preferring in the last resort to emigrate from Hungary altogether.

Another cause for unpopularity is the high proportion of Jews among the Social Democrat leaders, which has been at least as great in Hungary as in Austria or in Germany, although less, perhaps, than in some of the bourgeois democrat parties of Hungary itself. While the odium which sometimes attaches, among Christians, to Jewish-led movements and parties is usually founded on prejudice and ignorance, its existence is a fact which it would be futile to deny. It is, moreover, true that the Jewish socialist leader, born and bred in Budapest—the one big town in Hungary—is a very different person from the Magyar or Slovak labourer, and the lack of mutual comprehension has led at times to

results disastrous to the labour movement. Finally, a certain number of personal scandals among the leaders of the movement in its early days made an unhappy and enduring impression.

Uncared for, uneducated, disunited by national differences, cowed by the tradition of centuries of subjection, and without backing or support of any kind, the new proletariat was entirely at the mercy of its employers. The Government itself paid small attention to its needs, being fully occupied in retarding the ruin of the gentry class, and the humanitarian considerations which might have prompted a more advanced social policy were largely counteracted by the hostility with which the proletariat was regarded as an anti-national and potentially dangerous threat to society. The big landowners, while not, as has been said, averse from laying social burdens on the Jewish employers, were also anxious to keep an abundant supply of labour on the land, and to prevent conditions in the towns from tempting the villagers into them. They also believed that urban life bred conditions and a mentality which was un-Hungarian and undesirable. The workers themselves were, of course, excluded from any direct influence on their own conditions by the restricted franchise, and were too few, too disorganized, and too strictly controlled to exercise any other form of pressure. Until 1872 all forms of combination were forbidden altogether. In that year a law (re-enacted in 1884) legalized association as such, and even the strike; but incitement to strike was made an offence attended by heavy punishment, and the only forms of association allowed were those of a purely non-political type. The restrictions on the right of meeting made the hold of the authorities secure.

Even in an age whose industrial conditions, in

every country, were a scandal to humanity, observers were shocked by conditions in Hungary. The social legislation was primitive. Conditions in industry were regulated, up to 1918, mainly by a law passed in 1884 which, besides laying down certain safety regulations and prohibiting the truck system (up to that time a notorious evil) was concerned mainly with the question of child and juvenile labour. The employment of children under 10 was prohibited, that of apprentices under 14 limited to ten hours a day (eight in factories) and that of apprentices under 16 to twelve hours a day (ten in factories) with two hours' rest, while young persons under 16 might not be employed at night, except in certain continuous processes. At 16, however, a worker was considered adult, and thereafter was practically unprotected. A law of 1891 prescribed the Sunday rest, with very numerous exceptions, relating to mines, blast furnaces, State monopolies, and allied enterprises; where these exceptions applied, the worker was entitled to only one day's rest a month. Night work for women was prohibited in 1911. In 1893 a system of factory inspection was established. Sickness insurance was introduced in 1891, accident insurance in 1907.

Work in mines was regulated by an Austrian law of 1854, modified by some of the above provisions; river navigation, by a Ministerial Decree of 1869, fixing a minimum age of 12 for light and 18 for heavy work.

These laws gradually remedied a few of the worst abuses; but they could not make conditions other than miserable. An inquiry conducted in 1900 showed that of the male workers for whom data were available (comprising some 60 per cent. of the total) only about one-eighth worked less than nine hours a day; nearly half between nine and ten; more

than a quarter between eleven and twelve ; and 2 per cent. over fourteen. The commonest factory day was twelve hours, including breaks. The mines normally worked a twelve hour day. The usual hours for women were between nine and ten. There were frequent complaints that the existing legislation was ignored, particularly the provisions relating to breaks in the working day, and those prohibiting the employment of child labour. Of the men, 28 per cent. earned 14-20 crowns a week,¹ 48 per cent. 6-14, and 15 per cent. less than 6. Of the women, only 4 per cent. earned more than 14 crowns, 57 per cent. 6-14, and 38 per cent. less than 6. A certain rise in nominal wages took place between 1901 and 1910, but was offset by a rise in the cost of living.

Worse than the situation relating to hours, which could be paralleled in many countries, or even to wages, were the living conditions, and particularly the housing conditions, which were said by Dr. Bertillon, in a paper laid before the Eighth International Congress of Health and Demography, to be worse in Budapest than in any other large town in Europe.² In 1910 nearly 10 per cent. of the inhabitants of Budapest lived ten or more to a room, only 6.3 per cent. one to two to a room ; and the word "room" was used to cover the smallest and most insanitary of holes. There were many who could not even afford the comfort of a bed or half a bed in a shelter built by human hands at all. There were cave dwellings in rocks and quarries ; people sleeping in holes dug in the fields outside the city ; and in 1905 a police search in the municipal gardens revealed thirty-five individuals roosting in the trees, having tied themselves on by ropes.

¹ 24 crowns = £1 sterling.

² A similar criticism was made by Samuel Gompers in his *Labor in Europe and America* (New York, 1910), p. 95.

The idea and possibility of organization came to the workers only gradually. Most of the new proletariat were incapable of anything beyond sporadic and occasionally violent outbursts of discontent. The skilled trades, however, which were still mainly in the hands of the old German masters, had preserved a certain tradition, and this was afterwards reinforced by the skilled workers whom the employers found it necessary to import in order to remedy the almost total absence of competent foremen, or even highly skilled workers, among the native material. Nearly all of these immigrants came from the industrial regions of Germany, and brought with them the social and political theories of their surroundings. Owing to their influence (which was so strong that at first German was used equally with Magyar as an official language) the Hungarian Labour movement developed along strictly orthodox lines of Central European Marxism. The syndicalist and anarchist tendencies which have been at times so prominent in Latin and Slavonic countries alike left Hungary almost untouched so far, at least, as the official movement is concerned. The contact with the Austrian movement has, naturally, always been particularly close ; the first Hungarian Social Democratic Congress, of 1890, adopted bodily the "Hainfeld programme" drawn up by the Austrian party in the previous year.

The Hungarian political movement, like all the kindred movements in Central Europe, has from the first been very closely connected with the trade union movement, and every trade union, unless definitely oppositional, paid and still pays its subscription to the political movement. Hungary, however, has a curious variation from the usual system. As the legal unions are not allowed to occupy themselves with politics, each of them has

developed, side by side with itself, a secret "shadow organization" known as the "free union" (*szabad szervezet*), which performs the true political functions of the union, including the collection, administration, and distribution of strike funds. Every member of a legal trade union is at the same time a member of the corresponding "free union", and in most cases of the Social Democrat party also; three organizations which are nominally distinct but in fact so blended that it would take a skilled theologian to say whether they should more properly be described as trinity or unity.

It was one of the old and highly skilled trades, that of the compositors, which as early as 1861 formed the first trade union in Hungary, under the disguise of a mutual benefit association. Under the influence of the same group, a "general workman's association" was constituted in 1869. The Government was at first not hostile to the movement; but the events of the Commune in Paris, and the demonstrative sympathy with which they were followed in Hungary, scared the authorities. The association was dissolved, its leader prosecuted for high treason, and the repressive legislation against association described above was introduced. The Labour movement now sank into a long lethargy, while a moderate and an extremist group wrangled obscurely for the leadership. Gradually, however, the different trades began to organize, within the modest limits of legality, and in 1890 it was possible to hold the first Social Democratic Congress, which adopted, as has been said, the new programme of the Austrian sister party.

Personal rivalries among the leaders of the movement retarded its development for several years after this beginning; but it revived towards the end of the century, in spite, or perhaps rather

because of, savage repressive measures taken by the Government when the agitation spread to the provinces. It developed an ingenuity equal to that of the authorities in interpreting the intentionally elastic laws on association, meeting, and strikes, and from 1900 onward was able to conduct a not inconsiderable political agitation. The party itself was reorganized with new statutes and a new programme in 1903. At the same time, the trade union movement spread rapidly. A Trade Union Congress (which is now the official organ of the labour movement) was founded in 1904, and the number of workers affiliated rose to a peak figure of 130,000 in 1907—a modest number enough, but enormous in comparison with the few thousands of earlier years, and one which offered no mean tribute to the ingenuity, perseverance, and even the personal courage of the leaders. In 1906, indeed, the extraordinary spectacle was seen of the Hungarian Social Democrats in support of the Government. It is true that the Government in question was that of Baron Fejérváry, Francis Joseph's sturdy old lieutenant, who was attempting to rule Hungary in defiance of the historic parties, and had gained the support of the Socialists by a promise of universal suffrage. Repressive measures after Fejérváry's fall caused a certain decline in the party membership, and their activities decreased once the suffrage campaign was over. The Social Democrats were, however, now firmly established as leaders of the working-class movement. The Christian Social Party, constituted on the principles enunciated in 1906 by Pope Leo XIV in his Encyclical "*Rerum Novarum*" and modelled on the Austrian Christian Social Party, failed to gain more than a small fraction of the town workers; the Christian trade unions before the War numbered only some 10,000-12,000

members, mainly public employees. In the country districts, on the other hand, the Social Democrats had failed to gain a foothold. After the stormy decade of the '90s, the Government was able to keep all agitation within narrow limits, and break the link—already feeble enough—with Budapest. The strongest force in agrarian socialism was M. Varkonyi, who had seceded from the Social Democrats in 1897, and he conducted his movement on independent lines, although in later years he did not so much oppose the Socialists as by a tacit agreement divide the field with them.

The chief objectives of the Socialists before the War were necessarily political rather than industrial. A dictatorship of the proletariat on Marxian lines was a plain impossibility, and it was equally clear that no important progress could be made, either in social reform or in propagating the ideas of socialism, before the basic obstacles of the limited suffrage, the restrictions on meeting, the press, and the right of association, and the lack of education among the poorer classes, had been swept away. The very first necessity was clearly an extension of the suffrage, as the indispensable preliminary to further progress. This object brought the Socialists into alliance with other parties and fractions of the population whose immediate interest was identical with their own, if their final aims were entirely different. Thus they were found combining with the bourgeois democrats, with the non-Magyar nationalities, and even, on the famous occasion already mentioned, with the Crown itself. This, of course, increased their unpopularity with the ruling classes, and the Socialists were widely accused of treachery to the "national" cause. The reproach was just in so far as they had declared themselves, in theory, in favour of the principle of "equality

of right for all nationalities inhabiting Hungary"—a pronouncement which, however, did not prevent them from themselves maintaining a strictly centralized organization in Budapest, without national sections, and from adopting as their own the orthodox theory of the Hungarian State idea and the role of the Magyar race as Hungary's leaders.

Thus the internationalism of which the Socialists were accused was never more than relative, and indeed, their unions with other parties were mere *marriages de convenance*, and short-lived at that. We have mentioned that other classes in Hungary always regarded the Socialists with a certain mistrust and dislike, while on their side the Socialists were usually willing to abandon any fixed plan of campaign for a small opportunist concession. Nor is it easy to blame them when one remembers how sorely they stood in need of even the smallest alleviation.

At the beginning of the war, the strength of the movement showed a large apparent decline. Many members were called up for service in the army, and the more important factories were placed under military discipline. Trade union membership sank from 107,000 in 1913 to only 43,000 in 1915. This decline was, however, only the prelude to a new and larger revival. The desperate war-time conditions (although, thanks to the Government's policy, these were far superior to conditions in Germany or Austria), the strain of continuous effort, the discontent at the pittance paid in separation allowances, at the inordinate number of rich *embusqués*, and at the preferential treatment enjoyed in almost every respect by the officers—all these things helped to fan the smouldering discontent and to bring new recruits to the Socialist movement, as the best-organized party of opposition. In 1917

the hopes of all Labour received enormous encouragement from the successful revolution in Russia. Nothing of the kind was yet possible in Hungary, although the great strike in the munitions factories, early in 1918, showed that Labour was stronger and more radical than had been suspected. The ruling system was, however, also being attacked from other sides. The nationalities were growing daily in strength and boldness, and after Francis Joseph's death the new king insisted on an extension of the franchise which offered the Social Democrats the prospect of representation. It was, as many thought, a fatal mistake that they accepted the plan, although open ballot was to be retained in the country districts; for in this way the solidarity of interests between the urban and rural proletariat was broken.

The revolutionary period was a thoroughly unsatisfactory one for the Labour movement. The breakdown of the old system left the Social Democrats the strongest and best organized of the groups which succeeded to the power, but they had nothing like the influence, even over the industrial masses, possessed by the sister parties in Austria and Germany, and like them, they were as much occupied with defence against the extreme Left as with attacking the Right. At first they entered a coalition with the left-wing bourgeois parties, with whom, however, they were in rivalry rather than co-operation. While their efforts to secure the maximum power and benefits for their own followers disgusted the bourgeois parties and disappointed the peasants—particularly as they committed the cardinal tactical error of failing to introduce an immediate and drastic land reform—they entirely failed to satisfy the radical elements, which were being heartened by intensive propaganda from Russia.

When the Socialists concluded their famous pact with the Communists, uniting with them as the "Socialist Party of Hungary", and taking over the power in the name of the proletariat, the situation was little more comfortable. The Socialists were able, for the time, to safeguard the interests of their own followers as well as the situation allowed. The number of organized trade union workers rose in the second quarter of 1919 to the unprecedented figure of 1,422,420,¹ and real wages were kept up for the time, being in July, 1919, perhaps higher than they have ever been in Hungary, and more than two and a half times as high as they were six months later. All the time, however, the Socialists were the prisoners of their own allies—a clique of intellectuals who had little connection with real labour and of whose policy they often disapproved. Indeed, both by their own admission and that of others, the real Socialist leaders, and the old-established trade unions, were more of a counter-revolutionary than a revolutionary force during the dictatorship.²

The Socialists, and Labour in general, paid dearly for their own mistakes and for the excesses of their unwanted allies. When the dictatorship broke down, the peasants and agricultural labourers refused to support the industrial workers, who were left helpless and alone to face the counter-revolution. The

¹ This great rise was partly due to the fact that relief was distributed during this period, the trade unions being used as channels.

² K. Biró, a Communist who is chiefly concerned to expose the "treachery" of the Socialists to the labour cause, quotes numerous statements to this effect by the Socialist leaders in a pamphlet, *Die Ungarische Arbeiterbewegung, 1919–1925*, pp. 16 ff. Several employers also informed the mission sent to Hungary in 1920 by the International Labour Office that the trade unions had strongly opposed Bolshevism, one employer even stating that "we expected a counter-revolution originating with the trade unions (*Trade Union Conditions in Hungary*, p. 187). The Christian unions during that period became "secret counter-revolutionary bodies" (*idem*, p. 6).

latter took a drastic revenge on the leaders of the revolution, and saw to it without delay that the revolutionary movement should be not merely scotched, but killed. Within a few weeks, the old restrictions on the rights of association and meeting were restored, and a subsequent decree ordained "strict supervision" in order "to crush at the very outset every attempt directed against the established order of society, or against the State". Freedom was, however, to be allowed for the discussion of purely industrial subjects, and "even the appearance of political persecution" to be avoided. It is, however, generally stated that the restrictions in question are interpreted to-day even more rigorously than before the War, while the charge of "casting discredit on the Hungarian State" is capable of being applied to a surprisingly wide variety of words and actions. The severity of the regime has relaxed since the first days of the counter-revolution; but if the active pressure on the Labour movement is less direct, the guard kept against any kind of revolutionary tendency is no less vigilant.

In general, however, in its labour policy, the Government has returned to the time-hallowed system of *divide et impera*. The Socialist leaders themselves appear to have concluded that revolution will be impracticable for long years to come, and that their best policy is to make what terms they can for themselves and their own followers. As soon as the Communist experiment had failed, they indicated to the new Government their willingness to take part in the work of "national reconstruction", and the offer was soon accepted. The first elections under the counter-revolution were held, indeed, under a ballot that was nominally secret throughout the whole country, but under such

conditions that the Social Democrats abstained from voting altogether. Thus they were not represented in the new Parliament; but in December, 1921, Count Bethlen concluded a pact with the Socialist leaders. The full details of this have never been published, but the terms are believed to amount to the following: It was noted that large open-air meetings were prohibited, and the unions of the State officials, railway, and postal workers, which had been dissolved, could not be revived. The Social Democrats agreed not to make anti-Hungarian propaganda abroad, to dissipate false rumours of terrorization current among foreign Socialists, and to adopt the "national" standpoint in contentious questions of foreign policy. In internal policy, they agreed to collaborate on economic policy with the national parties, to abstain from political strikes, and to refer wage disputes to arbitration. They would break with the revolutionary parties. They agreed not to extend their agitation to the agricultural labourers, although they did not agree that the existing Union of Agricultural Labourers should cease its activities. They would also confine their agitation among the miners within such limits as not to endanger the continuity and measure of production.

In return, the Government agreed to intern only "terrorists, Communist agitators, and other dangerous persons" and to release and amnesty all persons for whom the Social Democrats would assume responsibility.¹

Shortly after the conclusion of this agreement, Count Bethlen put through his new Franchise Act, which provided for secret suffrage in the big towns,

¹ Biró, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-6. Analogous treaties have since been concluded from time to time, amounting usually to a certain political liberty for the Socialists in Budapest, in return for their support of the Government's foreign policy.

but open suffrage in the country. Since that date the Social Democrats have regularly supplied a small number of Deputies to the Lower House, always, of course, in opposition. They are somewhat more strongly represented, although again only in the minority, on the Municipal Councils of Budapest and the other large towns and in Budapest at least enjoy a certain latitude of speech and demonstration. Even strikes are sometimes decided in favour of the workers, and without bullets.

The Trade Union movement is also stronger than of old. The number of members has, indeed, sunk steadily until in 1932 it was only 110,060, but this decrease was due mainly to the prevalence of unemployment and the excessively difficult economic situation. In social policy also, undoubted advances have been made, thanks largely to the very efficient work of the Ministry for Social Welfare. Social insurance, in particular, has been thoroughly reformed and placed on a very modern footing. Act XXI of 1927 widened the scope of sickness and accident insurance, improved the system of benefits, and placed it on a sound basis. Sickness insurance contributions are paid by the employer and worker in equal proportions; accident insurance contributions by the employers alone. The benefits are on a generous scale. In 1928 a further Act was passed on invalidity, old age, and death insurances, which was amalgamated with the sickness insurance organization and administered by the same institution. Here the State pays a subsidy. The basic benefits are low, but are probably as high as Hungary can afford to-day.¹ The institution is, however, somewhat unpopular on account of its bureaucratic character and was, indeed, described

¹ For an analysis of these Acts, see *International and Labour Review*, November, 1929.

by a Socialist speaker in Parliament as "the best-hated place in Hungary".

The great gap in the social insurance system is the absence of any form of unemployment insurance, or even of dole, in default of which the unemployed, whose numbers for some years past have been enormous, are entirely dependent on charity; and although this is organized on a considerable scale, notably by Madame Horthy, wife of the Regent, it comes nowhere near to meeting even the barest needs of the unemployed.

Certain other advances have been made since the War, including closer regulation of apprentices' work, and somewhat stricter regulation of night work in factories and mines. The factory inspection is more effective, and hours of work have tended to decrease slightly.

They are, however, still very long, and still practically without legal limitation. In shops and offices, the normal working day is eight hours; in factories, nine (effective work); while in small establishments, home-work, etc., ten-twelve hours are sometimes worked, and there are still factories engaged in the textile and chemical trades, and brick-kilns, which work twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen hours daily.¹

Thus a certain place has been found in Hungarian society for the more solid and conservative sections of industrial labour, as represented, mainly, by the Social Democrat Party (the Christian Socials are more conservative still, but are barely a quarter the strength of their rivals, and have little influence outside the Government and allied undertakings). But it is a very miserable place. Wages in Hungary to-day are among the lowest in Europe. Since the economic crisis, collective agreements have ceased

¹ Information supplied by the Trade Union Council.

to exist in most branches of industry, neither is there any legal minimum wage. The average weekly wage for a skilled worker, working full time, is about 30 pengö ; for unskilled labour, 12 to 20 pengö. Given the cost of living, this rate would not be intolerably low, as wage-rates go, and is in any case considerably higher than the money rates paid in agriculture. Short time, with reduced wages, is, however, so prevalent (many factories working only two, three, or four hours daily) that few workers to-day can be earning more than 15 to 20 pengö, and many far less. The destitution which prevails among large classes of the population is almost inconceivable. I have spoken to many workers whose earnings averaged only 5, 6, or 7 pengö weekly. One old man I remember, a master cobbler, whose eyesight was failing, told me that when lucky he got fine work at 20 fillér an hour, but more often it was 10 fillér ; he seldom earned more than 3 or 4 pengö a week. He was quite unembittered, although his honest and harmless life was ending in slow starvation.

The wretched level of wages to-day is due mainly to the extreme poverty of the country, and it is hard to see how any substantial rise could be brought about without an improvement in the world situation. Yet the excessively low wages, the appallingly widespread unemployment and the total absence of any regular unemployment insurance, or even relief, make the condition of the great majority of Hungarian workers miserable in the extreme. Moreover, although recent years have seen a certain improvement, the social policy of Hungary is still far from advanced. It is a dismal contrast to pass from Vienna, equally impoverished, which has yet succeeded in carrying through a housing policy which has ensured decent living

conditions for many thousands of workers, to Budapest, where the municipality can afford statues to foreign journalists, but leaves whole colonies of human beings to huddle in cellars, kilns, and holes in the ground.¹ Indifference to the material needs of the poor is still very widespread, and equally general is the traditional social differentiation; the habit of regarding the workers as an inferior brand of humanity, of extracting from them the forms of servile obedience, and regarding any other attitude as not merely improper, but dangerous.

The organized Labour movement has for the moment accepted its fate. The Christian unions are almost a conservative force. The Social Democrats are more vocal, but to regard them as a revolutionary party would be a profound error. It is not, however, so certain that either of these two official bodies represents all, or even a large majority of Labour opinion. Even within the Social Democrat party there is a considerable left wing, and outside the organized party and the old-established trade unions the proportion of extremists is notably higher still. Active discontent has little chance to make itself heard. The Communist party has been dissolved and any radical agitation is instantly visited with severe penalties. Yet the very frequency of the trials for Communist agitation—a month rarely passes without at least one such trial, often involving a score of defendants—shows that discontent is still very widely spread. Much will have to change before labour becomes in reality what it is to-day in name, an integral part of the structure of Hungarian society.

¹ The Press recently reported the case of a man who had lived for two years in a municipal dustbin.

THE NATIONAL MINORITIES

The dismemberment of Hungary has deprived the country of most of its non-Magyars and proportionately reduced the acuteness of the national question. Even to-day, however, considerable numbers of national minorities remain. The census of 1930 gave a total population of 8,688,000, of which 479,000 were listed as speaking Germans, 105,000 Slovaks, 28,000 Croats, 16,000 Roumanians, 11,000 Bunyevaci, and 7,000 Serbs. All these figures showed a large drop compared with those of 1920, when the figure for German-speakers had exceeded 550,000, and for Slovaks, 140,000.

The practice of counting by mother tongue and not by nationality reduces the apparent number of minorities. Most of the gypsies and practically all the Jews are counted among the majority.

Of the linguistic minorities, the Germans easily hold the first place, in virtue alike of their historical record and of their present position. For many centuries Germans constituted the main trading, industrial, and mining class in Hungary, and much German blood runs in the veins of the ruling aristocracy, gentry, and clergy (the South Germans have always shown a special proclivity for the Church as a career). These middle-class Germans have, however, become completely Magyarized, except in a few frontier towns such as Kőszeg or Sopron. The German minority thus consists almost entirely of peasants and of the class known in Central Europe as the "village bourgeoisie"—small shopkeepers and the like. Except perhaps for the Heanzen in the counties of Moson and Sopron, who claim

to have preceded the Magyars (a claim contested by Magyar historians), they are all colonists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and are settled in three main blocs : firstly, in the north-west of Hungary, against the Austrian frontier, in Moson and Sopron ; secondly, in a long, rather straggling line running from a point west of Veszprém, north-eastward to the outskirts of Budapest, Buda itself being encircled on the west by a ring of Swabian villages, reaching to the very edge of the city ; and thirdly, in the old " Swabian Turkey ", the districts of Pécs, Baranya, and what is left to Hungary of the Bácska. Small blocs in the fragment-counties of Torontál and Arad mark the remnants left to Hungary of the large German settlements of the Banat now allotted to Yugoslavia and Roumania. In many communes of these districts the Germans number over 80 per cent.

As in the past, so to-day the Germans form a highly respected element in the population of Hungary. Apart from the one criticism, made by some Budapest housewives, that the Swabian market-women are rather too sharp in their methods, the industry, efficiency, and honesty of the Swabian peasant are generally and rightly admired ; and if they have a tendency towards smugness and self-esteem, it is not unjustified. They have also contributed their full share to Hungarian cultural life ; for instance, the famous novelist, Ferenc Herczeg, was by origin a Swabian of the Banat named Franz Herzog. As a class they are prosperous. Admittedly, many of them received a good start, having been settled as free peasants under exceptionally favourable conditions. They have, however, maintained and even improved their position by their thrift, industry, and superior methods of agriculture. A local proverb says with justice that " the Vlach and

Curiously enough, the Magyar peasants precisely of the German districts, particularly in the South, have for a generation past practised a rigid birth-control, thanks to which, although the Germans are among the least prolific of the nationalities of Hungary, they are gaining ground at the Magyar's expense. This fact has caused much alarm among Magyar nationalists, although not sufficient to spur

1880.....607,505 (11·4 per cent. of the total population).

1910.....	554,237	(7.3	"	"	"	"	)
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1920.....	551,211	(6.9	"	"	"	"	)
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1930.....	478,000	(5.5	"	"	"	"	)
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Between 1880 and 1910 the rural German-speaking population increased from 427,156 to 441,729, while the urban population sank from 180,429 to 109,482; and that in spite of the large growth of the towns.

them into attacking the real cause of the diminishing birth-rate, which is the shortage of available land, the districts in question being those in which "*fidei commis*" are strongest.

The Slovaks, who are mainly peasants or agricultural labourers, with a few industrial workmen and artisans, are scattered in small numbers along the northern frontier of Hungary, in the neighbourhood of Komárom and Esztergom and the County of Nógrád, and there is a colony officially estimated at some 28,000, in the County of Pest, including both workmen and artisans in Pest itself, and some few villages in the neighbourhood. Nearly all the remaining Slovaks in Trianon Hungary are settled in its South-Eastern corner, in the Counties of Békés and Csanad-Arad-Torontál. In Békéscsaba, in particular (Hungary's largest village) they form over 50 per cent. of the population, nearly 25,000 of them, according to official figures, living in this one village alone. All of this group are colonists, whose ancestors were brought to their present homes by a Magyar landlord in the eighteenth century; indeed, all the Hungarian Slovaks, except perhaps the inhabitants of a few villages along the northern frontier, are comparatively recent arrivals in their present home.

A petition submitted to the League of Nations in 1922 by persons claiming to represent the nationally conscious Slovaks in Hungary, put all these figures much higher: over 100,000 in Békés, 70,000 in and around Pest, 50,000 along the Danube, etc., giving a grand total of about 300,000; but to determine exact figures would be as difficult as to decide how many Irishmen or Scots were living in England. The number of Hungarians of Slovak origin certainly far exceeds that of the nationally conscious Slovaks.

Except for the group in Nógrád, none of these Slovaks could ever have hoped to be incorporated in the Czechoslovak State, and then only given an extremely generous attitude on the part of the Powers. The leaders of the Békés group, however, who had for some years been working to create a national consciousness among the Southern Slovaks, formed "national councils" during the revolutionary period, and declared in favour of Roumania when Roumanian troops were occupying their homes in 1919—an act which they lived to repent. Whether the declaration was wholly spontaneous or not, I cannot say. Roumania, as Czechoslovakia's ally, has allowed her Czechoslovak minorities considerable freedom; but declarations made during a period of military occupation are often, and perhaps naturally, suspect.

The Roumanians are the extreme outpost of the immigrant movement which flowed down from the mountains after the departure of the Turks. The Croats occupy a few villages on the Hungarian side of the Drave—the ancient and historic boundary between Croatia and Hungary; while other villages are scattered up the whole length of Hungary's western frontier, to the edge of the Fertő lake, their inhabitants being, like the Croats of the Austrian Burgenland (which was also part of Hungary until 1921) descendants of refugees from the Turkish period. The Slovenes, in the far south-west, are survivors of the pre-Magyar population, but they number only a few thousands, and have so long lived under a different regime from the Slovenes of Austria as to have lost any close contact with them.

The Sokaz and Bunyevaci are descendants of Southern Slav tribes, which emigrated into Hungary, the former from Bosnia, the latter from Herzegovina

in 1672. They settled in the rich lands of Baranya and the Bácska, the Bunyevaci mainly round Szabadka, the Sokaz further west, in the area round Baja, Mohács, and Pécs, where they still form a fairly substantial fraction of the population, but are cut off from the main body of Southern Slavs by a belt of German and Magyar colonists to their south. Both tribes are Catholics, and although they speak pure Serbo-Croat, they never identified themselves with the Serbian national movement. When Yugoslav troops occupied Pécs, and proclaimed a "republic of the Baranya", such support as that short-lived creation received came almost entirely from the Magyar miners, on social grounds, and attempts to gather a deputation of Sokaz to go to Paris and plead for incorporation with Yugoslavia proved unsuccessful.

The Sokaz and Bunyevaci were very prosperous half a century or so ago. They lived according to the old, patriarchal Yugoslav system of the Zadruga, under which the whole family, amounting sometimes to scores of persons, lived under the undisputed authority of the head of the house as a single estate and in a single house, the work being partitioned among the members of the family and the proceeds shared communistically. Some of these enormous old houses, built to accommodate sixty or eighty persons, still exist, and very imposing spectacles they are. The women were not entitled to any inheritance, receiving only a trousseau and a few household effects on marriage. When, however, the division of peasant properties was made legal in 1840, and particularly when the women discovered that the law entitled them to a portion of land, the family communities began to break up and the estates were divided. Besides spending inordinate sums on family litigation, the Sokaz proved unequal,

as farmers, to modern conditions. They had to sell many of the new small estates to Germans, and degenerated as a class into dwarf holders and labourers. They are, however, said to be doing a little better now, as fruit and poultry farmers. They are an interesting people, whose picturesque costumes and stolid Slavonic faces add variety to the markets of Pécs and Mohács, and live, on the whole, on reasonable terms with their neighbours, although ruefully described to me by a local police officer as "very wild when they have drink taken".

The Serbs are another minority with a history. The nation, of course, played a great part in Hungarian history, if a somewhat equivocal one from the Magyar point of view. They occupied at one time a great part of South Hungary, in more or less solid masses; but besides this, their settlements extended sporadically far up the Danube. In addition, Serbian merchants, up to a century ago, formed a considerable proportion of the trading community in the Danubian towns, being often the wealthiest sections of the communities even where, owing to their religion, they were debarred from enjoying full civic rights. Buda itself contained a large and flourishing Serbian colony, the memory of which is kept green in the two Serbian churches in Buda and Pest respectively, in the Serbian bishopric (still existing) of Szent Endre, a little way north of Buda, and in the quarter of Tabán, on the south side of Buda hill. Tabán is now, alas! doomed to demolition. Its winding, cobbled streets, its one-storied, whitewashed houses, its charming little gardens with their tangles of roses are to be replaced by large blocks of flats in the approved modern style; but there are men still living who remember when Serbian was still commonly spoken in the streets, and when the guzla twanged, and

Turkish coffee and slatko were served in a score of little, smoky restaurants.

But the old trading colonies have gone, their inhabitants Magyarized or migrated to Serbia. The generous frontier has included practically all the Serbian peasants in Yugoslavia. The few who remain are those who in 1921 refused to take the opportunity then offered them of opting for Serbian nationality. They are reputed to be bad husbandmen and idle, caring little for any occupation more laborious than that of herdsman and particularly shepherd. They are gradually giving way to the Magyars and the Germans.

The Bulgars are to-day chiefly a memory and a name. There were formerly several old-established Bulgar colonies in the Banat, interesting because the customs of the inhabitants differed in many respects from those of Bulgaria. Many Bulgars were also scattered all over Hungary, particularly near the Danube, working as market gardeners. Some went home to Bulgaria at the end of each season with their gains; others were permanently settled. There are still colonies outside Buda and other big towns, which they supply with a large proportion of their needs of fresh vegetables, and so well known are they in this capacity that market-stalls of greengroceries often bear the name "Bolgárkertesebe" even when the owner is a Magyar or a German.

Besides these linguistic minorities, Hungary contains in the Jews and the gypsies two other minority races, one of very great importance, the other, at least, of extreme interest. The Jews, as has been remarked elsewhere, occupy such a special place in Hungarian society that they cannot reasonably be considered on the same footing as the other minorities; moreover, by a decision of the Hungarian

High Court, they do not rank as a "national minority". Certain aspects of their case are, however, definitely connected with the minority question, and in considering the minority problem in Hungary, the existence of the Jews must not be forgotten.

And then there are the gypsies—charming and exotic race who, in striking contrast to the Jews, are so much less numerous and important than they appear to be. For thanks to the operettes and revues which are conceived in Budapest, gestated in Vienna, and brought to misbirth in London and New York, millions of the teeming West imagine that two people out of every three in Hungary are gypsies, whereas there are only about 50,000 of them in the whole country; the same people imagining that all the Hungarians whom they meet travelling abroad are Magyars of pure and ancient stock, and Counts at that; whereas nine out of ten are Jews, baptized recently or not at all. The gypsies add a picturesque and characteristic element to the racial hotch-potch in Hungary. In older days—they seem to have arrived in Hungary somewhere about the middle of the fourteenth century—they carried out a variety of professions. They were noted workers in metal, and largely employed in the making of munitions, in which trade, original as always, they failed to grow rich. They were hangmen and horse-dealers, and, of course, thieves, musicians, and witches. At that time they were still mainly nomadic. Maria Theresa tried to make them settle and take to respectable ways, and even to change their national name to "New Magyars" (Uj-Magyarok) but with very little success. They have, however, gradually abandoned their wandering habits, and most of them are now more or less settled. Most towns and villages of any size contain on their outskirts a quarter—sometimes it consists

of cottages like any other, only dirtier, and sometimes of hive-shaped, windowless mud huts, or even holes in the ground—which houses the local gypsy colony. Here they carry out their trades of brick-making and the fashioning of utensils of wood, clay, or metal, and hence the men emerge at night, clothed incongruously in the dinner jacket of convention, to exercise their main calling of music. Half the places of entertainment of Hungary, from the smoky village inn to the palatial Budapest restaurant, have their gypsy orchestras. Some of the first fiddlers in Budapest make large incomes and are much-fêted members of society, but I have only been able to trace one political move taken by them—in 1850, when one village community sent a deputation to the Crown to ask for “national equality of rights”; it being remarked that the events of the previous years had left their position unaltered, in that since 1848, as before it, the only notice taken of them by the administrative authorities was to whip them at sight. They live their own life, obeying their own elected “kings” and avoiding contact with the arm of the Hungarian law as far as they can.

The law applicable to these minorities falls under two heads: national and international. Internationally, Hungary is bound by Articles 54–60 of the Treaty of Trianon, which correspond to the “Minorities Treaties” imposed at the end of the War on the new and enlarged States of Central and Eastern Europe. Hungary undertakes to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all her inhabitants, without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race, or religion, and the free exercise of any religion not inconsistent with public order or morals; to grant to all her nationals, without distinction of race, language, or religion,

equality before the law and identical civil and political rights, including equal admission to public employments, functions, and honours or the exercise of professions and industries; free use of their language in private life, religion, the press, etc., and adequate facilities for the use of minority languages before the Courts; to grant to minorities the same treatment and security in law and fact as is enjoyed by other Hungarian nationals, including the right to manage at their own expense schools, etc., and to give adequate instruction in a minority language in the public primary schools in districts where a "considerable proportion" of members of a linguistic minority resides. Appeal against any infraction or danger of infraction of any of these provisions may be made to the Council of the League of Nations.

Hungary's national law is still governed by the Nationalities Law of 1868, described elsewhere.¹ Much greater concessions were offered at the end of the War, and particularly by M. Jászi, Károlyi's Minister for Nationalities (one of the few Magyar politicians of the later period who had given the nationalities question reasoned and open-minded consideration) to those nationalities whom it was hoped to retain, by these means, within the Hungarian State. As, however, the Treaty deprived Hungary of all her larger and more compact minorities, these plans fell to the ground. The Restoration established a Minister of Nationalities in the person of the late Professor Jakob Bleyer, leader of the German minority; but when it was clear that Hungary would not lose all her chief minorities, and when, perhaps, the consciousness of past omissions grew somewhat less acute, this ministry was dissolved.

¹ See pp. 99-100.

The chief post-War provision amplifying and interpreting the Law of 1868 is the Ministerial Decree No. 4,800/1923, further interpreted by the Decree 110,478/1923.¹ Under this measure, communes containing an overwhelming majority of members of the same linguistic minority, or the parents or guardians representing at least forty children of school age, belonging to a linguistic minority, in any commune, may ask for minority instruction in the State and communal elementary schools. They may then choose between the following three types of schools :—

Type A, with the minority language as language of instruction, Magyar being taught as a subject ;

Type B, in which natural history, physics, chemistry, economics, drawing, and handicrafts are taught in the minority language ; elocution, reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing in the mother language and Magyar ; Hungarian geography, history, constitutional law, and physical culture in Magyar ;

Type C, with Magyar as the language of instruction and the minority language as a subject, reading and writing being taught in both languages.

Complete freedom is allowed to communes, churches, societies, and private persons to open private schools in minority languages. The Government is responsible for the training of teachers for the minority schools.

These provisions, with a few others too detailed to be described here, entitle Hungary's minority legislation to rank among the most liberal in Europe.

The appeals made to the League Council under

¹ The decree issued by the Friedrich Government on 21st August, 1919, published on 19th November (No. 4044/1919 M.E.) and promulgated January, 1920, No. 38, 283/19 contains a long preamble but adds little that is positive to the Law of 1868.

Hungary's international minority obligations have been few compared to those directed against most of her neighbours. The only one to come before the full Council was an appeal by the Jewish International Societies against a law enacted in 1920 which restricted the admission to Hungarian universities to persons of "absolutely unimpeachable national loyalty and morality" as well as sufficient intellectual capacity, besides ordaining that the number of students admitted from each race or nationality should be proportionate to the number of inhabitants of that race or nationality in the country. It was not an easy case, for in one sense it established equality between the different nationalities, while in another it discriminated strongly against the Jews, who possessed a disproportionately high class desirous of receiving, and in a position to pay for, higher education. The Hungarian Jews, moreover, claimed that they did not constitute a separate "nationality", and this view was supported by the Hungarian High Court. The "*numerus clausus*" law was afterwards revised in name, and made somewhat less stringent in practice. The percentage of Jewish students is about twice as high as that of Jews to the total population. University education is, however, regarded mainly as the ante-chamber to State employment, and the preference of the authorities for non-Jewish State officials remains, broadly speaking, unabated.

The controversies which have arisen in Hungary since the war regarding the position of the linguistic minorities had turned chiefly on the question of minority schools, which, so far as can be ascertained, are not proportionate to the numbers of minority children of school age. The Germans possessed in 1933 40 schools of the type A, 191 B, and 265 C,

with 95 kindergartens in which German was used.¹ Instruction in Slovak was given in 50 schools of the B and C types, 43 of which were confessional schools.² The Germans, whose leaders lay great stress on their Hungarian patriotism, and reject accordingly the Treaty of Trianon, have never appealed to the League. In 1923 an appeal was sent to the League on behalf of the Slovaks by Slovaks living outside Hungary, who urged that the number of schools was entirely insufficient, and that any manifestation of Slovak nationalism was repressed.³ The Hungarian reply, besides contesting the accuracy of the plaintiffs' data, declared that the Slovaks enjoyed complete cultural liberty, as proved by the existence of cultural societies in Békéscsaba and Budapest, and not being "nationally conscious" did not desire any more education in Slovak. The Slovak leaders of to-day, however, describe the position as no more than "a basis for further development and encouragement".⁴ The German question was ventilated very fully in the summer of 1933, when Professor Bleyer, in his Budget speech,⁵ while protesting most vehemently the patriotism of the Hungarian Germans, read in their name a declaration urging that every national minority possesses a natural right to have its children educated in their mother language and complaining of the insufficiency of the existing measures (the C schools, in particular, could not properly be

¹ Figures given by the Minister of Education, *Pester Lloyd*, 1st June, 1933.

² *Die Nationalitäten in den Staaten Europas*, Ergänzungen, 1932, pp. 63, 64.

³ Four other petitions on similar lines were submitted in 1929 from Slovak colonies in America. The Committee of the Council dealing with them, on hearing the Hungarian Government's reply, decided that it was unnecessary to take action on the case.

⁴ *Die Nationalitäten*, etc., p. 63.

⁵ The debate on the Budget is used as an occasion in Hungary for voicing every kind of party grievance and programme.

described as minority schools) and of delays in fulfilling earlier promises made by Count Bethlen to transform the C schools into B schools. It was admitted in reply that the complaints were substantially justified, and a promise was given that the grievances would be remedied.¹

The general atmosphere of the national question is, naturally, much less electric in the Hungary of to-day than it was before the War. The minorities are much smaller ; they no longer enjoy the covert backing of outside Powers ; they cannot under any pretext be held to constitute a danger to the Hungarian State, as the Slovaks, Roumanians, Southern Slavs, and even the Germans undoubtedly did before the War. The only possible exception might be found in the German " Heanzen " on whom an expansionist Germany, having absorbed Austria, might perhaps be tempted to cast a covetous eye ; while of course there always exists in Magyar minds a certain fear, borne of past experience, of all Germans and German influence. This fear, which never slumbers very deeply, awoke suddenly when the National Socialists came into power in Berlin and began to evince an interest in their long-forgotten Swabian cousins, and when some of the Swabians showed signs of thrilling to that electric current of Volkstum which was galvanizing the Reichstag into goose-steps. There is, however, no reason to doubt the sincerity of the frequent and even passionate protestations of loyalty to the Hungarian State made by the Swabian leaders.

The position is thus in almost every respect far easier than before the War. It is, however, true that the basic consideration which has always lain at

¹ According to the *Sonntagsblatt* (the organ of the German Minority) of 28th January, 1934, there were still 265 minority schools in German parishes, comprising 67 per cent of all their schools, in which instruction was not given in the mother tongue.

the bottom of Hungary's nationality problem remains unaltered. The Magyar race is still a small and isolated fragment, surrounded by nations alien and naturally hostile to it, and far more numerous. It cannot even be called absolutely safe, even within its present narrow limits. Apart from the German menace, the "points of the Slav pincers at Szob and Szabadka", as Count Bethlen once put it, seem ever threatening to close on the small nation which for so long has separated the northern from the southern branch of the Slav race. The Magyars thus still have every reason to welcome reinforcements to their stock, and every inducement to Magyarize their minorities if it can be done.

They can, moreover, fairly claim that whatever the previous position, yet to-day, when their country has been reduced as nearly as the ingenuity of peace-makers could compass it to its purely Magyar parts, there is no reason why they should not be masters in their own house, such as is left of it. They are as fully justified as France, Italy, or Germany in making their State a national one, in which the whole nature of the State, the whole system of education, administration, and justice are essentially Magyar.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the general attitude of the Hungarian Government and Magyar public opinion to the national question is substantially the same as it was before the War. Hungary to-day is a completely and enthusiastically national State, and a member of a minority who wishes for any public career must be prepared to jettison his private national ideals and adopt those of the Magyars. He is even likely to be urged, with much cogency, to Magyarize his name—an ostrich-like device already in use before the War and recently revived, because it is said the non-Magyar names

were used as an argument against Hungary when the Treaty of Trianon was drafted.

He who prefers to confess to the national sentiment of his ancestors must resign himself to a much more restricted existence. It is generally admitted by the minorities that in such questions as allocation of contracts, land distribution, etc., no discrimination is shown against them by the authorities. The Government also undoubtedly wishes that the minorities should be treated justly, should be allowed full freedom to choose minority schools of whichever type they prefer, and should not be subjected to any pressure to become Magyarized ; and in this it enjoys the backing of the more sensible sections of the press and public opinion. But even the moderate party among the Magyars has shown itself adamant against any dilution of the purely national character of the State.

It is unfortunate that a chauvinistic fraction of the Magyar and Magyar-Jewish press and "intelligentsia" still believes that it has a patriotic duty to force the externals of Magyarization on the minorities, and still imagines that such efforts will really turn Germans and Slovaks into Magyars, whereas all experience proves that they will have precisely the opposite effect. The noisy agitation conducted by this section of the Magyar nation (which reached a climax on the occasion of Professor Bleyer's speech) does no small damage to the cause which the whole nation has at heart.

For the minority question is one of very great importance to Hungary. Small and humble as are the present minorities, circumstances have invested them with an importance which far transcends that which they could fairly claim on their own merits. The situation of the Magyar minorities in Czechoslovakia, Roumania, Yugoslavia,

and Austria is a principal and most natural object of solicitude to the whole Magyar nation, and Hungary can clearly only protest with effect against any possible maltreatment of the Magyars outside Hungary if her treatment of her own minorities has been exemplary. The question is, moreover, cardinal in the whole problem of frontier revision. While small frontier rectifications might be made without restoring any but purely Magyar districts to Hungary, any revision on at all a substantial scale, and any which would make the economic situation of the Middle Danube better and not worse, would necessarily involve bringing back considerable numbers of non-Magyars under Hungarian rule. The judgment of any persons contemplating such changes must be powerfully affected by Hungary's treatment of her present minorities.

Count Bethlen in a recent interview declared that—

“In so far as Hungary, who until the dictated peace always formed a geographical and economic unit, recovered this unity through revision of the Treaty of Trianon, this would of course only be possible on the basis that the non-Hungarian peoples inhabiting the districts to be reunited with her—Slovaks, Ruthenes, Germans, etc.—received full autonomy within the Hungarian State. Hungary is prepared at any time to grant a complete international guarantee in this respect.”

Most of the present minorities in Hungary are too small and too backward to make good use of any elaborate system of cultural autonomy. It does, however, seem to the outsider that Count Bethlen in these words showed a truer appreciation of the requirements of modern nationalism, even in a minority, than those extremists who greeted Professor Bleyer's entirely correct words with

such unedifying demonstrations. When the learned Professor, after referring to the large Magyar minorities outside Hungary, appealed to his hearers with the words :

“ Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you,”

Deputy Bajcsy-Zsilinsky, Member of the Order of Heroes, accused him of “ abusing our chivalry ”, adding other remarks for which Professor Bleyer challenged him to a duel, in which the combatants are reported to have set about one another with a zest not always apparent in Hungary’s frequent political contests. Fortunately, exhaustion super-vened before either of the two brave old boys had been seriously injured.

THE CROWN

If in the catalogue of the forces which make up Hungarian society we have left the Crown to the last, it has not been with any idea of minimizing its dignity or importance; but simply because its position will be more easily understood after that of its adherents and opponents has been described. Even to-day, the Crown possesses in Hungarian constitutional life an extraordinary and intrinsic importance hardly affected by the circumstance that it is at present without a wearer.

Hungary has always been a monarchy, and her life has always centred to a very special degree around her monarchs. Her most glorious ages have been those in which a noble and patriotic king has united her warring factions and led them to victory; almost the most famous moment in her history is that day when the young Maria Theresa appeared before her assembled magnates, and evoked from them the cry of "*vitam et sanguinem pro rege nostro*". Even her native saints—those, at least, which enjoy the chief repute—were royal personages: St. Stephen himself, his son St. Emeric, St. Elizabeth, St. Ladislaus. On the other side, her most dismal years have been those when she struggled against a Leopold I or a Joseph I; but somehow those contests only served to cast a glamour over the happier days when king and nation were not divided, and to strengthen the national longing for a just and wise ruler.

Of the experiences of history was born the mystic doctrine of the Holy Crown, which the old jurist, Verböczy, set forth in his code. "The king and the

community of nobles," he wrote, "are mutually dependent; so that they cannot be severed nor separated, and the one cannot exist without the other." The king the head, the nobles the members of the mystic body of the Holy Crown. Each without the other is incomplete, nor are the actions of either valid if taken without the other's consent.

To this doctrine, as to many others of her constitutional forms, Hungary has clung with a tenacity due in part to natural conservatism, in part to a sure instinct of self-preservation that has warned her that a nation numerically so weak, surrounded by so many enemies, cannot afford to dispense with any one of the foundations upon which its structure is built. These are considerations which appeal very deeply indeed to the great majority of the nation. Almost all Magyars have always been monarchist, and are so to-day, in spite of the fact that Hungary proclaimed herself a republic in 1849, and again in 1918. The wave of republicanism which swept over the country at the end of the War (one of the leaders of which, characteristically, was a Habsburg Archduke) was due to quite special causes. It came totally unexpected to the Government of the day which, by the confession of its own members, had hardly devoted a thought to the question, and had taken the oath of loyalty to the king in all innocence and sincerity only a few days before it proclaimed the republic. The fiascos which followed did nothing to modify the deep-rooted dislike of the Magyars for new things and it was with genuine relief that even those who had least reason to desire back the old ways, yet welcomed the return of the old forms. To-day probably quite 80 per cent. of the nation are monarchist in principle. The chief exceptions are to be found among the industrial workers, most, although not all of the Social Democrats being

republican. A few of the bourgeois intellectuals are of the same persuasion ; of the peasants, so far as can be judged, hardly any ; and of the wealthier classes practically none at all.

The present point at issue is not that of the Crown, but who shall wear it, and when, and even whether it is absolutely necessary that it should be worn at all ; for long experience of heads who have led their members uncomfortable dances have caused the Magyars so to stress the importance of the Crown, rather than the king, that some of them seriously suggest that so long as the Crown is there, a king is not necessary at all, and many are in no hurry whatever to crown him.

This variety of views is possible, because the position of the Habsburgs—the last dynasty to wear the Holy Crown—has become involved in a web of legal and political uncertainties difficult to parallel even in Hungarian constitutional history. Prior to 1918, the right of the Habsburgs to the throne of Hungary rested on the laws of 1627 and 1723, agreed respectively between Leopold I and Charles III, and the Hungarian Estates of the day, under which the Estates agreed to recognize the hereditary right of the Habsburgs, even in the female line, to the throne. Incidentally, the Hungarian law differed in certain points from the Austrian, or Pragmatic Sanction proper. For Hungary, the succession was confined to Archdukes and Archduchesses (thus excluding the children of morganatic marriages), and to Catholics. If, however, the line died out altogether, the Estates recovered their ancient right to elect and crown their own king.

The last crowned king, Charles IV, issued a proclamation on 13th November, 1918, not formally abdicating, but “recognizing in advance the decision taken by Hungary regarding its future

form of State", and renouncing any participation in the affairs of State. Charles had already issued a similar proclamation regarding Austria, which thereupon proclaimed a Republic. Károlyi's Government in Hungary followed suit on 16th November, having obtained an "opinion" from various experts, confirmed by the entire Law Faculty of Budapest University, that Charles's action had annulled the Law of Succession. The Laws of 1920, however, in passing a sponge over all legislation passed by Károlyi and Kun, also annulled the proclamation of the Republic and restored the monarchy. During the peace negotiations, the Allies attempted to insist on Hungary's styling herself a republic. The Hungarian delegates, however, refused to accept the term, and the Treaty of Trianon contains no reference to the point; but on 4th February, 1920, the Principal Allied Powers issued a declaration to the effect that, while it was not their duty to interfere in Hungary's internal affairs nor to dictate to her her form of State, a Habsburg restoration could not be considered as a question solely interesting Hungary, and that they would "neither recognize nor tolerate" such a restoration. There matters rested for a time. Charles was in exile in Switzerland, Horthy was elected Regent. While there were few Hungarians who did not look upon Charles as their legitimate crowned king, many felt that under the circumstances it would be better for all concerned if he did not assert his rights.

In 1921 Charles made his two attempts to return to Hungary. After the first of these attempts, the Allies forced Charles to retreat, and the Conference of Ambassadors repeated the previous declaration. After the second the Western Powers, and even more, the Little Entente, took up a very threatening attitude, and Czechoslovakia, in particular,

threatened to march into Hungary unless the Habsburg question was "finally settled".

In negotiation, Charles refused to abdicate, but eventually agreed to leave the country. Under strong and continued pressure from the Conference of Ambassadors and the Little Entente, the Hungarian Government on 3rd November, 1921, adopted a Law (Law XLVII of 1921) under which sovereign rights of Charles IV were abrogated (Article I); the rights of succession of the *Domus Austriaca* were invalidated—"an act which restores to the nation the right of proceeding to a free election of its king" (Article II); and the election to the throne was adjourned (Article III). On 10th November the Hungarian Government, in a Note to the Conference of Ambassadors, agreed to abide by the decisions of that Conference of 4th February, 1920, and 3rd April, 1921, undertaking to make no election whatever without a previous understanding with the Conference of Ambassadors and promising to pass a law forbidding pro-Habsburg propaganda.

Shortly after, Charles himself died. He left legitimate and Catholic issue, but his eldest son, Otto, was not, of course, crowned, and did not come of age, under Habsburg family law, for several years after his father's death.

Whether Budapest University was right or wrong, whether Charles's proclamation of 1918 was or was not equivalent to abdication, whether the Law of 3rd November, 1921, is binding legally or morally on Hungary, or can be repudiated on the plea of duress, are questions upon which I should not venture to pronounce an opinion; but the legal aspect of the question seems comparatively important, since it has clearly got itself into so beautifully ambiguous a state that a plausible case could be made out for any decision which political motives might prompt.

The political factors are much more straightforward, particularly outside Hungary. A cardinal consideration is the very strong opposition to a Habsburg restoration of a number of States, headed by Hungary's three neighbours of the Little Entente (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Roumania), which are now united in a very close alliance, originally and principally directed against Hungary. The case of a Habsburg restoration is not mentioned in the published treaties between these partners, but at the time of Charles's attempts to return (particularly on the second occasion) they defined their attitude plainly and emphatically. This is sufficiently described in the Note sent by Dr. Beneš on 22nd October, 1921, to Czechoslovakia's foreign representatives, part of which ran as follows :—

“The presence of the ex-Emperor on the soil of Hungary is a *casus belli*. We are proceeding without delay to prepare for mobilization, and we shall not hesitate to take the most energetic measures in unison with the other States of the Little Entente. Even if Charles should withdraw from Hungary we shall have recourse to the necessary diplomatic steps and exercise the greatest pressure, if necessary by armed force, to obtain the liquidation of the Habsburg question in Hungary and to put a final end to the danger created by the House of Habsburg in Central Europe.”

While Czechoslovakia's two partners have not been quite so outspoken as Czechoslovakia, and while the adhesion of all three countries to the Kellogg Pact has made it necessary for them somewhat to restrict the freedom of their utterances about *casus belli*, yet this statement of 1921 probably still represents the Little Entente's attitude, and the increased diplomatic solidarity which now exists between the three partners makes it reasonably certain that Roumania and Yugoslavia will follow

Czechoslovakia's lead. Optimistic politicians, who grasp at every straw, delude themselves from time to time with the belief that the Czech resistance to a Habsburg restoration is weakening. I have never seen any real sign of such a weakening.

The opposition is due, of course, to fear that a Habsburg in Budapest would exercise a strong attraction upon the territories detached from Hungary. The same argument applies rather less strongly to a restoration in Vienna; for the monarch in Austria is not bound by the oath required of the wearer of the Holy Crown, nor had the agglutination of territories known in 1918 as "Austria" the same tradition of historic unity as Hungary. An additional consideration is that the Austrians have accepted the dismemberment of their country (except as regards South Tyrol) with resignation and even relief, and not even the presence of a Habsburg would tempt them to renew their old relations of unhallowed intimacy with the Czechs and Slovenes; while many of the Magyars openly regard a restoration as a first step towards the recovery of their old frontiers. And while many legitimists declare quite sincerely that no threat to Hungary's neighbours is intended, and all the more progressive among them agree that the new monarchy could not be a mere reproduction of the old, those Successor States which are not too convinced of the popularity of their own systems may find some natural cause for uneasiness in remarks such as the following made by Count Anton Sigray:—

"When we speak of restoration and revision, the Hungarian problem appears to us to consist of the task of recovering a position corresponding to our power and at the same time also the hegemony which we, in union with other peoples, exercised in the past in the Danube valley."¹

¹ *Pesler Lloyd*, 24th January, 1934.

The attitude of the Great Powers is more equivocal. In the early days after the War, when ideals were still popular and Germany a comparatively negligible quantity, they backed the case of the Little Entente with strongly moral arguments. The decision of the Conference of Ambassadors of February, 1920, and April, 1921, announced that :

"The Principal Allied Powers consider that the restoration of a dynasty which represented in the eyes of its subjects a system of oppression and domination over other races, in alliance with Germany, would be incompatible with the achievements of the War in liberating peoples hitherto enslaved, as well as with the principles for which the War was waged."

Both when the Archduke Frederick took over the Government in August, 1919, and when Charles made his two attempts to return to Hungary, the Western Powers made clear their opposition, not to a Hungarian monarchy, but to a Habsburg restoration ; and they have not since departed officially from this attitude.

Unofficially, there has always been considerable sympathy for the Habsburgs, particularly in England and France ; and many people regretted that they should have been involved in the ruin of the Hohenzollerns. There was also the practical consideration that a powerful State in the Danube valley would be the only effective counterpoise to German expansion. The obvious form of such a State is that of a Habsburg monarchy, for traditional loyalty to an ancient dynasty is the only bond which could conceivably unite so many mutually antagonistic peoples.

This line of reasoning appealed very early and strongly to France, whose East European policy has always, and naturally, been dictated by purely egotistical considerations. She is the ally of the

Little Entente and of Poland because these are the strongest countries eastward of Germany whose interests coincide with her own. Had another and stronger combination arisen she would, however, have jettisoned her Slav friends in its favour without a further thought. There were times, before the map of Europe became so set as it is to-day, when the possibility of such a combination did not seem remote. It is an open secret that some circles in France, standing at least very near to the Government, long coquetted with the idea of a Habsburg restoration. One of Charles's adjutants, M. Boroviczeny, states that on his first return to Hungary, Charles had received from M. Briand "absolute guarantees" that he had nothing to fear from the Little Entente, while the Great Powers would only protest. This was denied; but Charles undoubtedly received sympathy and even help from French circles which were not wholly unofficial. An alternative plan which certain French politicians favoured for a time was for a different form of federation, under a Wittelsbach monarch, to include Bavaria, Austria, Trianon Hungary, and Croatia, with perhaps other territories also. At present these plans seem to have been dropped, in view of the attitude of the Little Entente; but it seems likely that France no longer objects to a Habsburg restoration on its own merits and would even favour it if her present allies could be induced to agree.

Italy's position is a little different. She has a direct interest in the Danube valley: to keep Yugoslavia weak, for which purpose she would like to see Hungary strong. A second interest is to prevent Germany from swallowing up Austria, since a Great Power on her own northern frontier could be exceedingly inconvenient, and might threaten her possession of the South Tyrol, and even of

Trieste. For these reasons it is natural to suppose that Italy would welcome a Habsburg restoration at least in Austria and Hungary; and numerous rumours have been current, at various times since the War, of Italian plans to this effect. Two articles in the *Tribuna* in May, 1931, were greatly remarked. That paper, which could hardly have committed itself so deeply without Signor Mussolini's approval, declared that Italy was "no longer bound by the anti-Habsburg pact, which has expired and has not been renewed, and is thus apparently in a position to reconsider her attitude, both in the question of an Austro-Hungarian rapprochement and also in that of a possible restoration of the monarchy"; and further that "the Hungarian problem . . . can never be solved unless the empty throne of St. Stephen is occupied". Rumours that Italy was trying to bring about an Austro-Hungarian union under a Habsburg again became current in the summer of 1933, but Italy's enthusiasm appears to have been rapidly damped when the Archduke Otto declared in September of that year that :

"The South Tyrol must be returned to Austria. The Habsburgs could never accept the Brenner as the boundary."

Italian policy is certainly thoroughly realist, and as Signor Mussolini has extended his warm friendship to General Gömbös, who became Hungarian Premier in 1932 and is known to be a strong anti-legitimist, she is unlikely to do anything which would weaken his position and disunite his country. But if Hungary herself wished for a Habsburg restoration, Italy would probably not oppose it to-day.

The considerations which lead the Little Entente to fear a return of the Habsburgs naturally make the

Hungarian legitimists desire to see it. It is not only the entirely comprehensible resentment felt by every high-spirited Magyar (which means every Magyar) against what they regard as an impertinent interference in their internal affairs. This feeling certainly strengthens the desire of the legitimists to repudiate the legislation which they were forced to enact under threat of invasion, and makes even the anti-legitimists chary of confessing to sentiments shared by Czechs and Roumanians. There is also the belief that a restoration would strengthen their country in many ways. It would restore the interrupted historic continuity and make Hungary's ancient Constitution, which has served her so well in the past, once again into a complete thing and not, as now, a torso. It would lend Hungary the prestige of what is in dignity and past greatness unquestionably Europe's foremost dynasty, and would exert a considerable influence on the peoples outside her present frontiers. There are still some loyalists—although fewer, perhaps, than many Magyars believe—in Slovakia, Transylvania, and even Croatia who see no attraction in a Hungary ruled by the Magyar gentry, but are not convinced that the change in 1918 was one for the better, and would gladly return to the old system, if modernized and improved.

Even if Hungary could not for the moment enlarge her own frontiers, she could under a Habsburg—so the upholders of this view argue—enter upon a personal union, and perhaps a customs union with Austria. Her economic position would be considerably improved, and this union would constitute the first step towards the formation of that Great Power in the Danube valley which history, as well as the need to stem Germany's expansion, seem to require. Thus two interests would be served: those of Europe and those of Hungary

herself, who would recover the position and importance due to her in the capacity of part, at least, of a Great Power.

For the legitimists, no king other than the heir to the throne by Habsburg family law (i.e. Charles's eldest son, Otto) would be acceptable. In the first place, they deny that recent events have rendered the Pragmatic Sanction invalid. In their view, that instrument still holds good and, therefore, not only loyalty but also respect for law, tradition, and constitutionalism demand Otto's accession. To ignore his claim would be a revolutionary act and Hungary, they say, has never prospered under a revolution. Besides, the alternative would be a king raised to power by a single party or faction. He would exert no attraction outside Hungary, and within the country he would be the prisoner of his own supporters. Hungary has known rival pretenders to the throne before, and they have plunged her into the most disastrous civil wars of her history. This might not occur again, but the legitimist candidate has so many supporters in Hungary that the election of *any* other would undoubtedly cause a very deep and lasting rift in the national unity.

The Free Electors admit the force of all the arguments in favour of a monarchy for Hungary. From the social as well as the constitutional point of view, they are fully as monarchist as the legitimists themselves, and equally anxious to avoid the aura of revolution which would cling about a breach of the historic constitution and the proclamation of a republic. A monarchy, on the other hand, is an essentially conservative institution; not least so in the absence of a monarch who might, as Joseph II did on one awful and memorable occasion, use his position to introduce radical and almost revolutionary reforms. But, they say, a monarchy does not

necessarily imply a Habsburg. The Habsburgs rendered Hungary certain services which it would be ungrateful to deny, but even more disservice. They seldom or never put Hungary first, but consistently subordinated Hungarian interests to those of other parts of their empire. Hungarian soldiers bled on distant fields to defend the Habsburgs' claims in Flanders or Italy or Poland. Hungarian industry was throttled to allow scope to the factories of Bohemia and Lower Austria. For centuries they did everything in their power to eradicate Magyar nationality, to wipe out the Hungarian constitution, and to reduce the historic kingdom of Hungary to an Austrian province peopled with obedient Swabians, Serbs, and Walachs. Even the religion most national to the Magyar soul was oppressed and persecuted in favour of an importation from the West designed to strengthen the hold of Western institutions and efface the memory of ancient freedom.

How otherwise, when Hungary has had a true national king! The days of her glory have been the days of the early Arpáds, János Hunyadi, and Matthias Corvinus, when she was ruled by men who cared for her only and sought only her greatness and prosperity. Moreover, her geographical position is such that she can never be unimportant. There is no need for her to be catching at the skirts of another in order to sun herself in the glory of a "Great Power". Alone, she is far more truly great.

Therefore, say the Free Electors, since the connection with the Habsburgs has been honourably severed by the act of the last crowned king—so be it. It is a pity that our wishes harmonize for the moment with those of our enemies, but we cannot give up an intrinsically desirable state of things simply because the Czechs happen to like it too. The Pragmatic Sanction is dissolved. Hungary is still

a monarchy, but she has recovered her ancient liberty of choice, and in her good time, and at her good pleasure, she will proceed to elect a national king. Meanwhile, the present form of the Regency is perfectly satisfactory to go on with.

It may be remarked here that there is at present no official counter-candidate of the Free Electors. For a certain period after the War the names of two Habsburg Archdukes, noted for their Magyar sympathies and connections, were often mentioned as possible candidates for election. For various reasons, however, they have no longer to be considered, nor any other of the darker horses whose names have been put forward from time to time.

These are the attitudes of the two great parties within the Hungarian "nation". Broadly speaking, the West, the Catholic Church, and the magnates are legitimists; the East, the Protestant Churches, and the gentry are Free Electors. The strongest force in favour of legitimism is probably that of the higher clerical authorities. In June, 1933, the Cardinal Primate made in the Upper House what was tantamount to a declaration in favour of a restoration. This point of view is supported by all the main Catholic dignitaries, and by the vast majority of the magnates. The Upper House is almost unanimously legitimist, and the Christian Social Economic Party, which is to-day the party of the big clerical and land-owning interests, has declared openly in the same sense. There is not, oddly enough, any important legitimist party in Hungary. A few minor groups exist, most of them having somewhat transitory careers. The important figures in the legitimist world, however, have deliberately abstained from founding a distinct legitimist party, in order to avoid even the appearance of associating a national question with the ambitions of a single party.

Legitimism has also a certain following among less exalted circles. Although legitimist reunions are almost invariably presided over, addressed, and largely attended by the bearers of historic names, yet strong emphasis is often laid on the fact that Otto is not to be simply the apex of a pyramid of barons, counts, and princes, but a social reformer—a “king of the poor”, as one speaker once put it. This idea has attracted some minds in Hungary. I have myself listened while a young intellectual of the poverty-stricken middle class explained to me that he was a legitimist solely because he believed that only a king could break up the social system at present dominant in Hungary, which he regarded as oppressive. This feeling is not rare among the opponents of the present gentry regime, who remember that many of the social reforms of the past were the work of Hungary’s kings, often forced through against strong opposition from the Estates. The peasants of western Hungary are nearly all legitimist, partly out of habit and partly from the simple reasoning, which has brought the old order many friends, that in the old days, when there was still a king and Hungary was still intact, things were better, money easier, and the price of wheat higher.¹

The Social Democrats are in the main republican, and if a king is to come at all, they would rather that it should be no Habsburg. They regard the Habsburg dynasty as Europe’s main champions of obscurantism, clericalism, and militarism, and expect no good from

¹ The leader of the Small Holders’ Party, Dr. Eckhardt, took up rather an ambiguous attitude in the Budget Debate of 1933. He argued that the question could not be solved before that of revision of “the reunion of all hands of the Holy Crown through the legitimate heir. A premature restoration would make our little Hungary of to-day the focus of all international intrigues. For this reason we must ask for a freer and more elastic period of transition, which is not to say that I should be disposed to reject prematurely the chances of a legitimist solution”.

any branch of the accursed stock. They are, of course, a small party, but represent a larger fraction of Hungarian opinion than is able to make itself heard.

The strength of the Free Electors lies in the gentry class, more particularly among the Protestants, who have religious as well as political reasons for disliking the Habsburg dynasty. A large number of the younger men, and particularly of the nationalist University students, are also on their side. They represent the old national tradition which carried on the struggle against Vienna in the days of the Dual Monarchy, and are fond of appealing to the memory of the old heroes of Hungary's past: Bocskay, Rákoczy, Kossuth, and the other champions of Hungarian independence. They have often found it rather difficult and delicate to express the strength of their opposition to a restoration, particularly before the death of Charles, who was, after all, the crowned king of Hungary, to whom the officers and civil servants had sworn loyalty. Admiral Horthy, whose conduct during his tenure of the post of Regent has won him the respect and esteem even of the legitimists, must have been in an exceedingly embarrassed position on the occasion of Charles's two returns to Hungary. Historians have always passed rather lightly over the history of these events, but the fact remains on record that on the second occasion General Gömbös offered strong armed resistance to Charles. It was only by fortune that the king was not killed by artillery fire from his own subjects. This fact gives some measure of the depth of real hostility entertained in certain circles to a Habsburg restoration. Gömbös afterwards became Honvéd Minister, and in 1932 Premier, and it seems probable that the army and the gendarmerie at least, and many of the key men in the Civil Service,

are now staunch Free Electors who would go to considerable lengths in defence of their principles.

The official attitude has always been that the Government recognizes the importance of the monarchist question, but does not consider the time ripe for solving it. This was the answer invariably given by Count Bethlen, during his long period of office, and as the difficulties of the political situation were obvious, while Bethlen was believed to be at heart a convinced monarchist—to mean, in fact, exactly what he said—the legitimists were generally willing to rest content with this answer, confining themselves to occasional demonstrations on the anniversary of Charles's death, on Otto's birthday, etc. The situation altered when Gömbös became Premier. On the one hand, the economic position in the Danube valley was by now generally recognized to be intolerable. All the international doctors were at work writing prescriptions, and the legitimists believed that their own nostrum had at last a reasonable chance of acceptance. On the other hand, they feared that the Free Electors, under the patronage of Horthy and Gömbös, were now entrenching themselves and that the internal situation in Hungary would become less favourable for them if they failed to act quickly. Gömbös, moreover, was more impetuous and outspoken than Bethlen. He did not agree politely that the anti-Habsburg law had been passed under the duress of foreign pressure; he admitted blithely that it was not unwelcome to him and his colleagues. He made a reference, which wounded many, to the impossibility of confiding Hungary's destinies to "a crowned child of twenty-one", and in various of his speeches he made somewhat harsh allusions to the legitimists as enemies of the harmonious development of the State. This stung the legitimists into far greater activity, and the

monarchist question occupied a very large place in the Budget debates of 1933. Some of the more impetuous speakers even denied, what all had admitted a few years previously, that the question was not ripe for immediate solution, and urged a restoration without more delay. A factor in the situation is that Otto, Charles's eldest son, is now of age.

Officially, however, the position remained unchanged. The Free Electors, like the legitimists, have abstained from creating a specific party of their own ; but although the legitimists assert that a high proportion of the ruling Party of Unity consists of their own sympathizers, that party, on 8th June, 1933, unanimously passed a resolution that :

“ The Party of National Unity considers the monarchist question to be not timely, and therefore requests the members of the Party not to participate in any way in canvassing this question.”

Even more important was a pronouncement made by Admiral Horthy on 8th October of the same year. Horthy speaks but little, so that his words, when they do come, carry all the more weight. Unveiling a War memorial at Mezötúr, he said :—

“ Our heroes achieved their great and glorious victories in absolute unity under their leaders. Our nation, too, can only maintain itself in the competition of the peoples if we aim at complete national unity, and eliminate, particularly from our political life, all questions not susceptible of solution to-day, discussion of which would involve our people in disastrous party struggles which would consume our national energy and be detrimental to the self-concentrated national.”

These words were universally taken as an affirmation of the Regent's sympathies and a warning to the legitimists. The power in Hungary to-day is in the hands of Horthy and Gömbös, and an immediate solution of the monarchist question therefore seems improbable.

THE PROBLEM OF REVISION

The Treaty of Trianon, signed by Hungary on 4th June, 1920, inflicted on her the severest losses which she has had to suffer since the sixteenth century. It contained, of course, a variety of provisions. She was condemned to pay reparations which, it was proposed, should be on a substantial scale ; was forced to surrender important interests and privileges outside Hungary ; to agree to deliver up for trial a number of so-called " war criminals " ; and to limit her fighting forces to an army of 35,000 men, without heavy artillery, tanks, poison gas apparatus, or military aircraft.

Most of these provisions, however, are, or probably soon will be, no longer in force. The " war criminals " clauses vanished early. The military provisions still hold good, but will probably cease to be operative shortly. The Inter-Allied Commission of Control, charged with supervising the execution of this part of the Treaty, was withdrawn in 1927. It is a fairly open secret that Hungary has since acquired a considerable number of arms from at least one benevolent friend, and that the so-called " Levente Organization ", a nominally voluntary association of boys and young men, gives its members a reasonably efficient substitute for compulsory military service ; although Hungary is still, from a military point of view, far weaker than her neighbours, Czechoslovakia, Roumania, and Yugoslavia, whose armaments are unrestricted.

Reparations, too, have run their course. In the first period after the War, Hungary paid a considerable amount of reparations in kind (other

property being seized by the Roumanian army when it occupied Hungary). Afterwards the lien on her assets was raised to enable her to receive a reconstruction loan. A fresh settlement on a reduced scale was made in 1927, and in 1930 a most complicated scheme was evolved, under which her payments, after 1943, were to be used mainly to compensate her own nationals whose property had been seized and liquidated by the Successor States. Under the "Hoover Moratorium" of 1931 these payments were suspended, and it seems hardly likely that they will be resumed.

But by far the most important clauses of the Treaty were naturally its territorial provisions, under which Hungary was ruthlessly dismembered. From a total area (excluding Croatia-Slavonia) of 282,999 square kilometres, with a population of 20,886,487 (1910 figures), she was reduced to 91,243 square kilometres with 7,515,886 inhabitants, or 28.1 per cent. of her former area and 36.00 of her population. 62,937 square kilometres with 3,575,685 inhabitants were assigned to Czechoslovakia ; 102,787 square kilometres and 5,331,449 inhabitants to Roumania ; 20,956 square kilometres and 1,434,208 inhabitants (again excluding Croatia-Slavonia) to Yugoslavia ; 14,798 square kilometres and 344,240 inhabitants to Austria ; and the city of Fiume with a population of 20,890 to Italy.

These draconic terms evoked a storm of protest which has shown small signs of dying down since. On the contrary, the economic crisis, together with the increased sympathy which has been shown in recent years, particularly by Italy, with Hungary's misfortunes, have made it even stronger to-day than it was some years ago. The demand for treaty revision entirely dominates Hungary's international policy, and occupies perhaps the foremost place

among her problems in the minds of the more comfortably situated classes of her population. And although the poor are more immediately interested in the social problem, yet there is no truth in the suggestion so often made that the demand for revision is confined to a few aristocrats and big landowners. This class has suffered grievously under the Treaty, since their estates, left practically intact in Hungary, have been taken from them in the Successor States for the purpose of agrarian reform. But the agitation is even stronger among the gentry and officials, so many of whom lost their posts in the Successor States and flocked into Budapest, where they form an impoverished and embittered element of the population. Indeed, those who do not join in it are, to judge from my own experience, a small minority. There are a few bitter political opponents of the present political system, most of them now in exile ; but even Kun in his day followed a strongly nationalist policy, and the Social Democrats of to-day are heartily in favour of revision if, at the same time, they deprecate the present Government's hostile attitude to most of Hungary's neighbours. The German minority, officially, demands the restoration of Hungary's old territories, including the Burgenland. Even among the Germans along the Austrian frontier I have found the same attitude, if rather less enthusiastically expressed. The only definite exceptions in my personal experience have been among the poorer class in Sopron (Oedenburg) who were attracted to Austria, not only by national sentiment, but also by the far superior standard of Austrian social legislation. Of the sentiments of the Hungarian Slovaks and Roumanians I cannot judge ; but I can say that far more violent irridentism has been preached to me by Magyars

of the lower middle class than by any of their social superiors.

In demanding revision, Hungary is often accused by her neighbours of being a disturber of the peace. "Revision means war," they say, and because Hungary wants revision, they accuse her of wanting war. The former statement may be true, although it is not exactly an elevated argument and those who use it would do well to remember how often, within the last century or century and a half, the failure to resolve national injustices peacefully has led to war, and with what disastrous results, for what appeared to be the stronger part. To the latter accusation Count Bethlen, when lecturing in England in the autumn of 1933, replied most appropriately that if Hungary wanted war, she would not ask for peaceful revision. In doing so, moreover, she is acting entirely within her rights; since the present Peace Treaties, unlike almost any which have preceded them, contain specific provision (in Article XIX of the Covenant) for revision. The provision is, it is true, weak—so weak that some believe it to be practically illusory; but it is there, and stands as an eternal sign that the makers of the Treaties did not necessarily believe every detail of their work to be sacrosanct.

In another respect also the Peace settlement of 1919-1920 differs from most, if not all of those which have preceded it. It was nominally concluded, not on any basis of spoliation or of *væ victis*, but of international justice. The guiding principle, which was enumerated by President Wilson in his "Fourteen Points" speech of 18th January, 1918, and which the Allies were under an unquestioned moral (if not a technical) obligation to apply in the case of Hungary, was :—

"the guiding principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak."

"Unless," added Wilson, "this principle be made its foundation no part of the structure of international justice can stand."

The makers of the Treaties were pledged again and again to the principle that the peace which they were laying down should be a just peace. Not only that : they claimed, after the terms had been settled, that, substantially, justice had been done. They did not negotiate the draft with the Hungarian delegates, but presented it to them in the form in which it was meant to be signed ; but in reply to their protests, they declared that : "true to the spirit by which they were inspired in tracing the frontiers fixed by the Treaty, the Allied and Associated Powers have nevertheless considered the case of the frontiers thus traced not corresponding precisely with ethnical or economical requirements. An inquiry held on the spot may, perhaps, make apparent the necessity of a displacement of the limits laid down by the Treaty in certain parts." A general and immediate inquiry was not possible ; but if the Delimitation Commissions found that the Treaty, in some spot "created an injustice which it would be to the general interest to efface" it might report to the Council of the League, which would offer its services for an amicable rectification. "The Allies and Associated Powers are confident that this proceeding will furnish a convenient method for correcting in the delimitation of the frontiers all (any) injustice against which objections not unfounded can be raised."

Hungary built high hopes on this promise, but it amounted in reality to very little. The main lines of the frontiers had been fixed, and the

Delimitation Commissioners were not empowered to "contemplate" "changes of the frontiers of such nature that these would call into question the basis of the lines described in the Treaty". Only very small changes were effected, and not all of these were to Hungary's advantage; for in some cases she had to buy concessions by giving compensation elsewhere.

The meagre result of the work of these Commissions is adduced by Hungary as one of the many injustices under which she was made to suffer; for it is hardly necessary to say that Hungary has consistently maintained, and with deep conviction, that the just treatment thus solemnly promised was never, in fact, meted out to her. And, indeed, no one will assert that it was easy for her to look upon the Peace Conference as a judicial and unprejudiced body. It is true that some of the accusations levied by her advocates are demonstrably unfounded. It is, for example, often asserted that the Peace Conference worked in ignorance, on the basis of insufficient or inaccurate material. This may possibly be true in a few instances. It is alleged that the Conference was induced to accept as frontier the stream running past Sátoraljaújhely on the grounds that this is a "navigable river", whereas it is actually (as I have myself seen) a mere trickle of a streamlet. But in the main, the British and American delegations, at least, were supplied with the most ample and conscientiously exact material, and when considering the all-important question of nationality they used Hungary's own official figures.

It is also incorrect to argue, with one recent, and very intelligent, champion of Hungarian claims, that the territorial provisions of the Treaty were designedly or avowedly punitive. The "war-guilt" clauses of the Treaty are confined to reparations and to the

"war criminals", and all the argument which has raged round Hungary's attitude in this question is therefore practically irrelevant. Nor were the consequences of such blame as Hungary was compelled to accept very serious for her, since the actual amount of reparation finally exacted from her was small. I do not myself think that any reparation was justified, as although Tisza did not press his original opposition to the war against Serbia to the length of resignation, I do not see how he could have been expected, placed as he was, to do so ; nor does it seem fair to judge the conduct of 1914 by the standards of 1919, and penalize it because it failed to come up to those standards ; nor does any odium of war guilt seem to have been attached, for example, to Poland on account of the attitude of the Pole, Bilinsky, nor to Roumania for her second declaration of war.

On the other hand, the atmosphere which prevailed in Paris in 1919 and 1920 was hardly favourable to strict equity. It is an old maxim that no man should be judge in his own cause, and the Allied statesmen were both plaintiffs and judges. None of them, not even Wilson, was in a calm or judicious mood, and even had the statesmen been possessed of a more than human detachment, the public opinion of their countries, neurotic, exasperated by the sufferings of a long war and greedy for the spoils of victory, was always there to counsel the worse and easier course. Moreover, not only were the judges themselves subject to a natural bias, but they consulted the advocates of one party, and one party only. The documentary evidence had been compiled from sources which included Magyar official papers ; but the Magyars were not invited to discuss the preliminary terms of peace, nor do they appear to have had any single important friend at court while their

future was being discussed. Their neighbours, on the other hand (except only Austria) were there in the capacity of allies; were in frequent, almost constant touch with the persons responsible for the final decisions; lobbying them, interviewing them, lunching and dining with them, and were, in fact, formally invited, at the very beginning of the negotiations, to state their wishes. Thus such negotiating and bargaining as took place was not between the representatives of the two conflicting interests, but between the avowed advocates of one side and their own friends and allies, who were only one step removed from an equal interest. It is hardly likely that in a different atmosphere the Czechs would have been able to obtain under the Treaty nearly twice as many ex-Hungarian subjects as they had themselves asked for in their first statement of claims.

And if it is certain that the British and American delegates struggled bravely and sincerely against the influences of war psychology and suggestion to which they could not possibly fail to some extent to be subject, if it is also true that certain advocates of national claims (M. Bratianu, of Roumania, was a notable example) did their own cause more harm than good by overstatement and by irritating the jangled nerves of their listeners, yet it is hardly contestable that one of the Powers which sat in the seat of judgment was not interested in applying the principles of justice at all. It is quite clear that France was paying no more than lip-service to Wilson's principles. She had already decided on her policy of making allies of at least two of Hungary's neighbours, and was intent throughout, not on getting a just settlement, but on strengthening her friends; and in the questions which related to Hungary's frontiers, France was particularly

influential. Mr. Lloyd George stood up on several occasions for Germany, but seems to have troubled himself little about Hungary. Italy, whose policy was opposed to that of France and might, therefore, by practising an equal and opposite egotism, have cancelled it out, was weak and disorganized, deeply unpopular with the rest of the "Big Four"; absent altogether from the Conference for part of the time and during the rest fighting with such fury for questions which concerned her even more directly that she was unable to put up much of a resistance over the Hungarian frontiers.

Finally, Hungary's internal conditions at this period were nicely calculated to incur for her the absolute maximum of odium. Up to 1918 she retained an aristocratic regime which exposed her, in a world nobly inspired by democratic idealism, to many attacks on social grounds, and made it plausible for the nationalities to represent their cause as one of liberty, democracy, and enlightenment. She then proceeded to indulge in an experiment in Bolshevism at the precise moment when Bolshevism was a word of the most unmitigated horror to the capitalist world; and finally liquidated that experiment by methods which inspired much disapproval, and restored a regime which made few concessions, even in appearance, to the spirit of the age.

So bitter was the atmosphere towards Hungary prevailing at the Conference, that it is hardly surprising that quite a number of the considerations which might in other circumstances have prevailed in her favour were simply ignored altogether, and that of all conceivable bases of settlement, that which was least favourable to her was applied throughout.

To begin with, not every age would have identified the principle of justice with that of national self-determination so completely as our own age has done.

Since President Wilson proclaimed this gospel in his Fourteen Points, Four Principles, and other speeches, it has become so familiar and so widely accepted that it is not even easy to realize its novel, indeed, its revolutionary character. As a general principle, it could hardly have proceeded from a country other than one which had secured its own independence through a revolutionary act, committed long enough ago to have acquired the respectability lent by time, but not so long ago as to have been forgotten. Never before in history had it been applied so extensively as in 1919 and 1920, and even then it was by no means universally admitted. It was applied only in connection with the defeated Powers, and is not recognized by any State to-day as a valid cause for altering frontiers in time of peace.

Hungary has always felt bitterly that an injustice was done to her in this complete ignoring of her historic position. She looks back with a natural pride on her thousand years of independence, often endangered, for long periods nominal rather than real, but never wholly extinct. Anomalous as her position was in the Dual Monarchy, it was certainly such as to entitle her to the respect due to a sovereign State.

Another point on which the Magyars insist is that, given Hungary's history, it was unfair to allow the non-Magyar nationalities the right to bring about her dismemberment. It is, they argue, one thing to concede this right to an autochthonous population, formerly conquered and now recovering its independence ; it is quite another to permit immigrants to enter a country, enjoy its hospitality, and repay this by dismembering it. The application of this argument to Hungary rests upon historical theses which are much disputed, especially in the case of Transylvania ; for the controversy whether the Roumanians of that district are a pre-Magyar population, or entirely

consist of later immigrants, has not yet been solved to the satisfaction of neutral observers. The Magyar claims regarding the Slovaks are also probably exaggerated. It is, however, indisputable that a considerable proportion of the non-Magyar inhabitants of Hungary in 1918 were comparatively recent immigrants, and to this extent the argument seems reasonable. One can imagine the consternation that would reign, for example, in Scotland if the large Irish population which has recently settled in the South-West were to claim a sacred right to incorporation in the Irish Free State.

The fact, upon which they also insisted with much force, that the level of Magyar culture was higher than that of most of the nationalities, was an argument which to some extent cut both ways. Hungary's contention was that the Magyars had been a civilizing element, which was gradually drawing the barbarous and backward nationalities up to its own level; while her enemies maintained that she had deliberately stifled their development by forbidding any culture but a Magyar one to exist in Hungary. There is some truth in both points of view. On the one hand, the culture and level of education of the Roumanians of Transylvania was admittedly higher than that prevailing in the Regat; on the other, it was a fixed policy of the Magyars that all higher culture in Hungary must be Magyar, and Magyar only. It would, perhaps have required political wisdom of an unusual degree to persuade the Magyars, situated as they were, that their true salvation lay in fostering non-Magyar culture, and not suppressing it. One may recall that some of the wisest Magyar statesmen advised this course; but most of their politicians rejected it.

The Magyars, even at the Conference, did not claim that historic rights should necessarily override

the principle of national self-determination. On the contrary, they accepted the latter as one of "indestructible moral force", as a "natural right", and a "question of human dignity". But they denied with great vehemence that the nationalities, as a whole, even wanted to be separated from Hungary. The Treaty, they said, took language as the sole criterion of nationality, and then was applied the principle of "nationality-union", i.e. automatically assigned as many persons as possible to each nationality, so determined, to a single State. Self-determination, however, should mean consulting the people's political sentiments, and in this feeling of political nationality language was only one element, which might quite well be outweighed by sentimental, historical, and economic considerations.

Hungary vehemently denied the charge of oppressing her nationalities, and claimed that in the case of many of them the language-factor was in fact so outweighed that given their free choice, they would have remained with her ; particularly as the Slovaks are not, after all, identical with the Czechs, but only their near kinsmen, while the Ruthenes belong to a different branch of the Slav family of peoples altogether ; and she asked that plebiscites should be taken in the areas in question.

Theoretically, the point was a perfectly sound one ; for it is quite true that the makers of the Treaty appear to have identified, almost automatically, the principle of what the Magyars called "nationality-union" with that of national determinism. The few instances, however, where plebiscites were allowed under the various Treaties showed that a considerable proportion of the populations concerned preferred the State to which they were connected by historic ties. The willingness of the Magyars to put their faith to the test ought to be set to their credit,

and the reply of the Allies that the main nationalities concerned had already signified their wish spontaneously, was too comprehensive to be very satisfactory. The Allies were, of course, handicapped by the fact that, by the time the question came up, they had already definitely sanctioned two of the main frontiers, and had practically sanctioned the third; and they had, to support their cases, the decisions of Turocz Szentmárton, of Gyulafehérvár, and of Ujvidék. It is quite clear that the representatives of certain large sections of the population had signified unmistakably their will to be free of Hungary, and it is difficult to imagine how the Magyars could have failed to expect this. Gyula Andrassy had himself declared in February, 1918, that "self-determination is a dangerous catchword, the realization of which would mean the end of the Hungarian State". Nor is it at all easy to suppose that a plebiscite to-day, at least among the Slovaks and the Roumanians, would give any other result, and that in spite of the friction which has undeniably occurred in the last ten years between the Czechs and Slovaks, Czechs and Ruthenes, Serbs and Croats, and, to a lesser degree, the Roumanians of Transylvania and those of the Regat (Hungary is now demanding plebiscites under international control for the Slovaks and Ruthenes, and for the populations of the Bácska and Banat¹). At any rate, a very impressive answer was recently given by the Slovak Deputies in the Prague Parliament to the separatist agitation conducted by Father Jehlička.

It is no less clear that in no area was the population

¹ This is the programme of Count Bethlen who, although no longer in the Government, must be supposed to speak with authority. For Transylvania, the demand for a plebiscite has now been dropped, and Count Bethlen is asking for the constitution of Transylvania as an independent State, on a basis of complete equality for the nationalities inhabiting it.

as a whole consulted, and had this been done, results much less unfavourable for Hungary might have been reached ; particularly as there would have been a reasonable case for taking decisions separately in certain well-defined geographic areas. The Magyar minorities would probably have voted almost solid for Hungary, except in a few cases where they might have been influenced by social considerations—and the situation was, of course, singularly complicated during the critical period, to the disadvantage of the Magyars, by the existence of the Bolshevik regime, followed by the White Terror. The attitude of the Swabians and Jews must remain more doubtful ; but the Magyars have certainly a right to protest against the absolute assumption that these two races would wish to be liberated from Hungary. The Jews are the Magyars' old allies ; and the Swabians, if they have had their quarrels with the Magyars, have on the whole taken their side against the other nationalities more often than not. I can remember myself that at the time of the cession of the Burgenland to Austria, the enthusiasm displayed by the German population concerned was no more than lukewarm. The fact that both nationalities came to terms gracefully with the Successor States, when confronted with *faits accomplis*, is no sure indication of how they would have voted, given an absolutely free choice. Similarly, it is claimed that the Wends of the Muravidék and the Slavs of the Muraköz showed no wish to leave Hungary, and protested to the Peace Conference against the decision allotting them to Yugoslavia. It certainly does not appear that Yugoslavia, when in occupation of Pécs, was able to work up any genuine popular enthusiasm among the local Slavonic population for the separatist movement which she tried to foster there.

But further, the Magyars argued, the dismemberment of Hungary would be disastrous for the country as a whole, and not least for the nationalities. Hungary was not merely a historic unit, but also a singularly perfect economic and geographical unit. If the centre of her political life had lain in the great plains, this was due to natural causes, which automatically placed the race inhabiting them in a predominant position. Practically all communications within the ring of mountains led naturally inward to the centre, where they met at Budapest. Mountain and plain compensated one another and supplied one another's needs. In the mountains of the periphery were situated the timber, salt, iron ores, copper, and other raw materials of industry. Here the industries depending immediately on raw materials had been situated, and had sent their produce to the centre, where the finishing industries were sited, and where the products of the different parts of the periphery could be exchanged. Again, the plains of the lowland supplied the foodstuffs on which the barren mountain regions depended. The natural economic connection between highland and lowland was exceedingly close, and could not be broken except to the lasting detriment of all concerned. The mountaineers, especially of the north, were accustomed to come down into the plain in summer for harvest work, which afforded them a large part of their incomes. Logs were floated down the tributaries of the Danube; they could not be floated to Prague. The sugar and tobacco factories of the periphery drew most of their raw material from the Alföld.

But any attempt to divide up Hungary on ethnographical lines would be fatal to this economic unity. For except in the south, it is broadly true that the ethnographical line runs along the mouth of the

smaller valleys. The Magyars are a people of the plain, who have ventured up into the valleys where these are particularly broad and accessible. The Slovaks, Ruthenes, Roumanians, and Germans (the last-named in so far as they follow their natural bent, not the colonists) are mountaineers, although here and there their settlements extend into the plains. But on three sides of Hungary, a frontier which tried to follow the ethnographical line as closely as possible would necessarily run along the valley mouths. This would rudely break the essential economic links which nature had forged in the course of centuries. Mountain and plain alike would suffer, the former, perhaps, even more than the latter. The valleys, between which there was little lateral communication, would be condemned to isolation and ultimate but ineluctable ruin; while such industry in the Burgenland and Slovakia as survived the loss of its traditional markets would be killed by the much stronger organizations of Vienna and Bohemia respectively. In the drastic words of the Hungarian delegates to the Peace Conference, if such an attempt were made, "State-formations would spring into being which every expert geographer would condemn to death in advance, for geographical absurdities never last long. The part of Hungary left would be surrounded by such frontiers as cannot by any means be called natural, and would therefore be the causes of eternal feuds, political disturbances, and, moreover, of cultural and economic decadence. The process of dismemberment must be disastrous to the peoples living on both sides of the new frontier."

If this argument seems weak, it must be remembered that it had been held valid in the very similar case of Bohemia and Moravia, next door to Hungary. The three million odd Germans of those two pro-

vinces, who had clearly signified their will to belong to a German State, were yet assigned to Czechoslovakia on the ground that "the populations of German speech inhabiting the borders of those provinces should remain associated with them in the development of the national unity with which history has bound them up (*les a rendu solidaires*)".

What is sauce for the goose might have been supposed to be sauce for the gander; and the same argument under which the Sudetic lands were incorporated in Czechoslovakia might certainly have been applied to exclude Slovakia and Carpatho-Ruthenia from it. The Peace Conference, however, clearly went on the assumption that all the non-Magyar nationalities would wish to be freed from Magyar rule, and that all of them should be rescued from it when it was physically possible so to rescue.

Having thus decided the major issue against Hungary, the makers of the Treaty were faced with two very serious difficulties. The first, which has already been mentioned, was that the ethnical frontier ran, as a rule, along the valley mouths, and it was impossible to leave the inhabitants of the mountains without lateral communication. They would simply starve, and the States so formed would be incapable of economic existence.

The second difficulty was that the races were so intermingled as to make a clean cut on ethnographical lines quite impossible. Broadly speaking, the centre of the old Hungary was Magyar, while the periphery was German on the West, Slovak on the North, Ruthene in the North-Eastern corner, Roumanian in the East, Serb in the South, Croat in the South-West. But this is only a very rough description. The Germans did not live only in the West, but in enclaves throughout the whole of Hungary, forming a large element of the population of the Banat, in

the south-east, and of Transylvania, further east still. There were smaller enclaves of Slovaks and other races in the heart of the Magyar districts. Conversely, the Magyar-speaking territory ran well up into the periphery at Nyitra, Kassa, and Ungvár in the north ; on the Upper Tisza, in the County of Szilágy, and up the valley of the Szamos in the east ; and above all, there was the great enclave of the Székely, some 600,000 strong, in the extreme east of Transylvania, separated from the remaining Magyars by a broad belt of mainly Roumanian population. In many areas outside the central Magyar districts the towns were inhabited chiefly by Magyars or Magyarophile Jews, while the surrounding countryside was Slovak, Ruthene, or Roumanian ; in one important instance (that of Szabadka) the position was reversed, the town being Yugoslav (Bunjevacs) while the countryside was Magyar. In some areas the valleys were Magyar, the mountains Roumanian, and there were districts, mainly in the south, where villages of Serbs, Magyars, Roumanians, and Germans were mingled in entirely inextricable fashion. Even within each village, along the areas where the different races met, two or more races were often represented.

To the Magyars, this was an additional argument against dismembering Hungary ; for if, they said, it is really unjust for peoples of one race to have to live as national minorities in the territory of another, what has been gained by causing four minority States to grow where one had been before ? But at Paris the point of view was taken that the regime of the new States would be less oppressive than that of the Magyars had been, particularly as those States were being required to sign treaties guaranteeing the protection of their minorities ; and that while no more Magyars should be placed under foreign

rule than was unavoidable, yet the first necessity was to make the new States *viables*.

The settlement actually made was, briefly, as follows—

Czechoslovakia's portion consists of the northern chain of the Carpathians, with a strip of the plain at their foot. The population in 1910 was given as 1,702,064 Slovaks, 1,084,343 Magyars, 266,047 Germans, 435,892 Ruthenes, and 87,334 others (Roumanians, Poles, Gypsies, etc.). The area falls into three fairly distinct sections. The first runs from the old frontier of Moravia to the mountainous core of the Slovak country which begins east of the River Ipoly. The high-lying hinterland which comprises the greater part of this area is inhabited almost entirely by Slovaks, with some German islands; but the frontier was extended down to the main channel of the Danube, leaving to its north a broad strip of plain on the left bank of the Danube, and in particular a large island lying between the main channel and a strip northward of it (the so-called Csalloköz), which are inhabited by a preponderantly Magyar population. The main city, Pozsony, now the capital of Slovakia, was in 1918 largely inhabited by Germans, although containing also Magyars and Slovaks; its historical connections were with Hungary. It was assigned to Czechoslovakia in order to give her an outlet to the Danube (port and railway facilities being considered insufficient) and has in fact grown and prospered as Czechoslovakia's chief outlet to the water.¹ The Csalloköz was assigned to Czechoslovakia as gravitating economically to Pozsony, and because an outlet to the Danube of only some 10 kilometres was not

¹ She also possesses certain rights on the Elbe and a free zone at Hamburg.

considered sufficient for her, and the plain north of the Danube for similar reasons.¹

Beyond the Ipoly, the Slovak zone comes down more nearly to the present frontier, without, however, actually reaching it. A comparatively broad Magyar-speaking rim, about one-fourth as wide as the mountain area behind, has been left to ensure lateral communication. The frontier also cuts across the valley in which Kassa, a city which in 1919 was mainly Magyar, is situated.

In the third zone, the plains are again Magyar with Magyar and Jewish towns, while the population of the hills is Slav; not, however, Slovak, but Ruthene or Ukrainian. This remote people was attributed to Czechoslovakia at the wish of some of its leaders and under guarantees that it should receive "the fullest degree of self-government compatible with the unity of the Czechoslovak State". The offer was particularly welcome to Czechoslovakia, since only through this promise can she get direct land communication with her friend and ally, Roumania; moreover, she is ensured by it against either Poland and Hungary securing communication, or a great Ukrainian State crossing the Carpathians. It is, moreover, true that the Ruthenes had been exceptionally neglected by the Magyars before the War, and the offer of autonomy made to them at the eleventh hour hardly compensated for the policy of decades previous. Nevertheless, all Carpatho-Ruthenia's economic connections run southward into the Hungarian plain, while communications with the West are long and difficult.

The population figures for the area assigned to

¹ It is freely asserted by the Magyars, although denied by other authorities, that strategic considerations also entered into the determination of this line, which brings the Czechoslovak frontier within some miles of Budapest at its nearest point.

Roumania were 2,819,405 Roumanians, 1,663,576 Magyars, 559,824 Germans, and 87,339 others (mainly Serbs, Ruthenes, Slovaks, and Gypsies). The frontier, running from north-west to south-east, cuts right across the great "D" of the Eastern Carpathians, leaving eastward of it not only the Carpathians themselves, the central plateau of Transylvania, and the hills which form the bar of the "D", but also a considerable strip of plain. The Székely and the Magyar islands in the city and County of Kolozsvár were sacrificed as lying within the main Roumanian-speaking territory. The western frontier, however, was drawn frankly for the benefit of Roumania, to whom it gave three important Magyar towns—Arad, Nagyvárad, and Szatmár—with a countryside that was overwhelmingly Magyar, or Magyar and Swabian. This was done in order to allow Roumania a line of communications from north to south, without which the Roumanian population north of Szatmár would practically have been cut off from access to the world; for it would have been expensive and difficult to construct a new railway through the Carpathians.

Yugoslavia acquired a population (excluding Croatia-Slavonia) of 471,804 Serbs and Croats, 457,497 Magyars, 304,111 Germans, and 200,696 "others". Of the last-named, a high proportion were Yugoslavs, namely Bunyevaci, or Catholic Serbs. It seems to have been assumed without question that these desired incorporation in Yugoslavia, but it should be recognized that in their case, as in that of the Sokaz, a certain religious and historical sentiment exists which to some extent counteracts the pull of a common language. A plebiscite among them would probably not have given a unanimous vote either way. Nearly 100,000 of these Bunyevaci are, moreover, concentrated in the large town of Szabadka,

in a countryside which is mainly Magyar, although further south there is a German belt. This very generous concession to Yugoslavia was admittedly made largely on strategic grounds¹ and seems to have little other justification. Similarly, a corner between the Danube and the Drave, which is largely Magyar and German (although Sokaz along its northern edge) was cut off. It is said that the shifting of the river had made it difficult to choose the Drave as the frontier. Further westward, the line follows the old frontier with Croatia-Slavonia, except that a section (the so-called "Mur Island") was transferred to Croatia. The inhabitants are Yugoslavs, but are said not to have asked for the change.

Fiume, which ultimately fell to Italy, could clearly not remain Hungarian if Croatia was detached. Hungary's losses to Austria are small, consisting of a narrow strip in which 217,308 were Germans, 26,225 Magyars, and most of the remainder Croat immigrants from the seventeenth century. The German population, it may be mentioned, extends in the north well beyond the frontier. Geographically, most of the northern part of this strip belongs to Hungary, the centre and south to Austria. The centre has, however, suffered severely by the fact that a plebiscite was allowed for the chief town, Sopron (Oedenburg), and a few surrounding districts, and they voted for Hungary.

It is difficult to deny that these frontiers were drawn in a manner exceedingly unfavourable to Hungary. Wherever it was to the advantage of Czechoslovakia, Roumania, or Yugoslavia that the national principle should be applied rather than the economic, it was duly applied ; wherever those three

¹ See H. W. V. Temperley, *How the Hungarian Frontiers were Drawn* (Foreign Affairs, U.S.A.), April, 1928, p. 439.

States found that economic or even strategic considerations outweighed national, the national principle suddenly lost its importance. One might surely feel that if the national principle was so very weighty, then it ought to have been applied more evenly. If Germany was expected to be content with servitudes on the railways crossing the Polish Corridor, Roumania might have been asked to accept a similar arrangement guaranteeing uninterrupted communications north and south between the different areas on her western frontier. If Serbia's nerves could not contemplate with equanimity a potential enemy within striking distance of Belgrade, it would surely have been more satisfactory to draw a frontier which would have made possible friendly relations between Yugoslavia and Hungary. The existence of this Magyar rim just outside her frontier round a full three-quarters of it is a lasting source of exasperation to Hungary—the fact that in certain cases the frontier was hastily and foolishly drawn is an additional pin-prick, but less important by comparison. Even those Magyars (and such do exist) who are quite without imperialist ambitions, and would rather be masters in their own house than engage once more in the wearisome struggle with the nationalities, deeply resent the unfair way in which the frontier was drawn in certain sectors. According to the Magyars' own figures, there are over 800,000 Magyars in Czechoslovakia, more than 400,000 in Roumania, and about 250,000 in Yugoslavia thus living in compact blocks immediately within the frontiers of the Successor States, who ought to be restored to Hungary. There are also, behind these overwhelmingly Magyar areas, other zones of mixed population which contain considerable Magyar populations interspersed with other nationalities. These figures may be criticized, but even writers

decidedly unfavourable to Hungarian claims concede that several hundred thousands of Magyars could be restored to Hungary without placing more than insignificant numbers of other nationalities under Magyar rule.

The difficulty is that to do so would be to increase the economic difficulties at least of the parts lying north and east of the revised frontiers, without, probably, appreciably easing Hungary's own situation ; for the areas which she might in this way recover would be the outskirts of the Great Plain, similar in character to her present territory, and the revision would do nothing to restore the economic balance of the old Hungary which the Treaty so rudely upset. Clearly, however, it is asking too much of the Magyars that they should renounce their wishes in order to spare their neighbours inconvenience ; and it must in fairness be stated that their claim on the purely Magyar areas has been considerably strengthened by the history of the past ten years. This has shown that the mad enthusiasm for the homogeneous national State has grown rather than decreased in Europe since 1918. Of all the Successor States of Hungary, only Austria has not been accused of serious infringements of her Minorities Treaty. The complaints levelled against the other three have not always been founded, and Czechoslovakia in particular has gone in some respects even far beyond what her Treaty requires of her. But we are gradually discovering that the Treaties themselves are far too weak to afford a national minority adequate compensation for exclusion from its own national State ; and so long as the present state of mind continues to prevail, justice does indeed demand that the numbers of minorities should be kept as low as possible.

The same consideration naturally applies in the

inverse sense to the larger claim; for Hungary herself is by no means exempt from the nationalist tendencies which prevail among her neighbours. A considerable section of her press and public opinion has, indeed, relaxed nothing of the Magyarizing efforts which proved so unsuccessful before the War. Responsible statesmen have, however, realized that Hungary's situation has now changed, and the Slovaks and Ruthenes are offered, should they return to Hungary, very far-reaching autonomy, subject to effective international guarantees.

Given the continued prevalence of contemporary national ideals, the claim of Hungary to a form of revision which should bring the political line into closer conformity with the ethnographical is a very strong one. It would, however, quite fail to solve the problem of the Middle Danube Basin, but rather aggravate it by further concessions to a principle totally unsuited to Central Europe, and destructive of it. If this is ever to be achieved, a complete reorientation of ideas is necessary, in which Magyar nationalism, Czech nationalism, Roumanian nationalism, Yugoslav nationalism, and German nationalism will have to make sacrifices. The only true solution is to readjust the relationships between nation and State. If this can be done, frontiers will gradually cease to matter.

In writing this, I am in complete accord with some of the strongest opponents of Hungary's claims to revision. I differ from them in the further deduction. They believe that Hungary would then no longer desire to see the frontiers changed. I hope that, in the same situation, the Successor States (in part at least) would no longer wish to keep them intact, holding as I do that the old frontiers were, broadly speaking, more natural than the new. But

I believe it to be common ground that the oppression of one nationality by another can never bear any good fruit, and that the ideal of the future must be in co-operation between equals. In such co-operation the Magyars, thanks both to their central position and to their great natural talents, cannot fail to bear an honourable and signal part.

FOREIGN POLICY

Hungary's foreign relations since the War have been entirely governed by her situation under the Peace Treaties, which have given it a fixity of purpose which makes it singularly easy to follow in many respects. Whatever the divergences of opinion as to the methods which she should pursue to achieve her aim, on the purpose itself the nation is practically united. As a recent writer said :—

“The final aim is common: the salvation of Hungary and the accomplishment of her historic vocation; and common, too, is the conviction that, to attain it, her present territory is insufficient, and that there are in the lives of nations historic forces superior to the human will, which, consequently, cannot be evaded.”

Some sections of Hungarian opinion concentrate their efforts on, and would be satisfied with, a revision of the Treaty on ethnographic lines; others demand the larger revision, with restoration of something approximating to the old frontiers, but are prepared to readjust the relationships which used to prevail between the Magyars and the nationalities; while a few of the old guard appear to have forgotten nothing and learnt nothing from old struggles and old failures. These divergencies may become important in the future; but for the present they are insignificant compared with the community of conviction that the present frontiers are unjust and intolerable.

Being too weak to attain her objects through her own resources, Hungary must naturally seek for allies. An isolated fragment of the oriental races

embedded in Europe, the Magyar nation has no natural ally, to which ties of blood-kinship or irresistible natural sympathy would automatically draw it. Hungary is condemned by her situation to a policy of national egotism, will always choose the ally most likely to lead her to her goal, and will have less natural hesitations than most States in changing her friends if they fail to bring her the anticipated help.

Yet while Hungary's prime object is to recover the place which she believes to be due to her, she cannot remain indifferent to certain ulterior considerations. Throughout their history the Magyars have had to fight at once against the danger of invasion from the East ; against the pressure of the Slav peoples on the North and South ; and against the formidable power of Germany on the West. The eastern danger appears to be eliminated to-day, but the other two still subsist. The Slavs seem to-day to have won the victory, and it is a natural temptation to call in the Germans to redress the balance. Fundamentally, however, the Magyars fear the Germans at least as much as the Slavs ; the latter are their neighbours in the Middle Danube Basin and have a certain natural community of interests with them, both economically and from the point of view of mutual defence against Germany. Thus many Magyars would always prefer the friendship of their neighbours, if it could be obtained on satisfactory terms.

This was the policy of the old "kurucz" fighters, who were willing to ally themselves even with the Turks against Austria ; of Kossuth when he dreamed of a Danubian Federation ; and in 1918, when Hungary severed the bond with Austria, the first hope of the men then in power, Károlyi and Jászi, was to form of Hungary an "Eastern Switzerland"

resting entirely on the support of the eastern peoples. The plan was, however, based on the assumption that the old Hungary would not be destroyed, and it lost its *raison d'être* when the new Successor States took shape.

For a time Europe was still in a chaotic condition. Few people were convinced that the new conditions were certain to prove stable; nor was the distinction between possessors and dispossessed so clear as it afterwards became, for the victors were still squabbling between themselves for the spoils of war. Poland was at loggerheads with Czechoslovakia, Roumania with Yugoslavia, and France did not want to commit herself finally to any one system of alliances until she was quite satisfied that it would give her the best results. Italy, moreover, was under weak and uncertain leadership, and had not yet evolved a fixed European policy. The position was still further complicated by the fact that Russian Bolshevism was still in its militant phase, and the capitalist Governments of the West were ready to consent to almost any sacrifice to combat it.

During this period the Restoration Government carried on a fairly warm flirtation (mainly unofficial) with France. Certain circles in France were known not to be opposed to a monarchist restoration in Hungary, and negotiations were also carried on which held out prospects to Hungary of a more favourable Treaty if she gave military help to Poland against Russia (a plan frustrated by the attitude of Czechoslovakia). There were, too, various combinations on foot for an understanding between Hungary and Roumania; and plans to the same effect have been elaborated behind the scenes on many occasions since. For the Roumanians, like the Magyars, are non-Slavonic peoples and both see with some apprehension

the advance of the Slav flood which has characterized the past century.

Economic conditions, moreover, spoke very strongly in favour of an understanding between the peoples of the Middle Danube Basin. None of the countries concerned had yet had time to adapt itself to the new conditions. The agrarian countries had not yet begun to industrialize, nor the industrial countries to foster a hot-house agriculture. The one desire of all business men everywhere was to bridge the gaps, re-form the old connections.

Some of Hungary's earlier leaders, including M. Gustav Gratz and Count Teleki, thought it possible to bring about a certain economic rapprochement with the Successor States, without political rapprochement. Fairly hopeful negotiations with Czechoslovakia had begun early in 1921. But already Dr. Beneš had been at work to create the "Little Entente" of Czechoslovakia, Roumania, and Yugoslavia, the prime object of which was mutual defence against revision of the Hungarian Treaty. In August, 1920, the treaty between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia had been signed and an understanding reached with Roumania. In March, 1921, King Charles's return to Hungary swept away the remaining hesitations, and the Czechoslovak-Roumanian and Roumanian-Yugoslav treaties were signed soon afterward.

These treaties encircled and practically isolated Hungary. Three of her four neighbours were now banded against her, and France was showing her sympathy ever more plainly with the bloc so formed (the great military loans to the Little Entente States were given in 1923, the alliances followed in 1924). The Conservative Government in Hungary would have none of Russia, the ally on which Kun had called with such scant success; the republican and

Socialist government of Germany was profoundly unsympathetic to her (although not so the extreme reactionary and militarist circles in Germany, which even at that date were a powerful force behind the scenes). More important still was the reconciliation which had taken place between Italy and Yugoslavia, after their bitter quarrels at the Peace Conference. On 12th November, 1920, these two States had signed a treaty at Rapallo, settling their outstanding frontier disputes, with a supplementary Convention under which they bound themselves to maintain the Peace Treaties with Austria and Hungary, to take action in common (limited in Italy's case to diplomatic action) to prevent a Habsburg restoration, and to inform each other of attacks directed against their security by Austria or Hungary. Finally, Italy stated that she had heard with satisfaction of the alliance between Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, for purposes similar to those of this Convention, of the conclusion of which she wished Yugoslavia to inform Czechoslovakia. In February, 1921, Beneš visited Rome, after which he and Sforza, for Italy, exchanged Notes declaring that their conversations had revealed complete accord on their foreign policies. Thus as regards Hungary, the Italy of that day was almost completely at one with the Little Entente.

Of all Hungary's neighbours, there remained only Austria her companion in misfortune. But apart from the hostility entertained towards the Hungarian regime by the Austrian Social Democrats, there was a bone of contention between the two countries, in that Austria, under the Treaties, had been promised possession of the German-speaking west of Hungary (the district afterwards known as the Burgenland). Hungary was not obliged to hand over this area until the Allies had ratified the Treaty of Trianon, which they did not do until

July, 1921; and she was particularly determined not to yield possession. Armed bands filled West Hungary and forcibly prevented the Austrian authorities from entering it. Finally Hungary appealed to Italy, through whose mediation a compromise was arranged. A plebiscite was held in the chief town, Sopron, and after this had given a large majority for Hungary, she retained the town and a few communes in the neighbourhood, the rest of the disputed area going to Austria.

This was the first service rendered by Italy to Hungary—and it was undoubtedly done at the time less to favour Hungary than to weaken Austria. But it left the way clear for better relations between Austria and Hungary. Count Bethlen, who now became the dominating force in Hungarian foreign policy, seized this as an escape from the only alternative, an agreement, reached via Prague, with the States of the Little Entente which, he said in a later lecture in Berlin, “would not only have meant a pilgrimage to Canossa for Hungary, but would have meant her throwing herself on the victor’s mercy and finally accepting the provisions of the Peace Treaties.”

For the time no very active policy was possible, and Hungary had to content herself with gaining admission to the League of Nations (which, after some difficulty, she accomplished in 1922) and with slow consolidation. The League Reconstruction Loan, by giving other countries an added interest in her situation, helped to strengthen her position. She also acquired a prestige quite disproportionate to her area and population by the exceedingly able way in which her affairs were handled in Geneva by Count Bethlen and Count Apponyi, thanks to whom she acquired many sympathies, and began once more to be counted as a force with which Europe had to reckon in international affairs.

It was not, however, until 1926 that she really emerged from her isolation. The process commenced, curiously enough, by a certain rapprochement with Yugoslavia which could not, however, be carried far owing to Yugoslavia's own troubles. Her Foreign Minister had concluded with Italy a new Convention (that of Nettuno) which was extremely unpopular in the country, and which the Skupština refused to ratify. In Italy, too, feeling against Yugoslavia was running high, and the idea of a Yugoslav-Hungarian rapprochement was unwelcome. Just at this moment Italy was embarking on an increasingly active Danubian policy. Her relations both with Germany and with Austria had been gravely troubled by German complaints of Italy's policy in the South Tyrol; and perhaps partly in answer to this, Italy concluded two important treaties: a Treaty of friendship and arbitration with Roumania, then under the leadership of the Italophile General Averescu, and the Treaty of Tirana with Albania, which was so far-reaching as effectively to scotch the incipient Italophile movement in Yugoslavia. Overtures were also made to Bulgaria, and finally to Hungary. The initiative admittedly came from Italy, but the offer was eagerly seized, the more so as Italy was able to give Hungary certain advantages regarding a commercial outlet to the Adriatic at Fiume; while owing to the unfortunate "forged francs scandal" the Hungarian Government was at the moment particularly unpopular in France. The friendship ripened apace; in April, 1927, Count Bethlen visited Rome, and in the atmosphere of ceremony dear to both parties and to the accompaniment of enthusiastic speeches a Hungaro-Italian Treaty of Friendship and Arbitration was signed.

At the time, emphasis was laid on the fact that

the treaty could give no ground for anxiety to any other country, but it shocked opinion in Roumania, and when, in June, M. Ion Bratianu took General Averescu's place, that country's short-lived flirtation with Italy was ended. The rivalry between France and Italy in South-Eastern Europe became still more overt when the Franco-Yugoslav Treaty of Friendship and Arbitration was signed in November, 1927, to be followed eleven days later by the signature of a defensive alliance between Italy and Albania. Nor were matters at all improved by objections raised by the Little Entente to the withdrawal of military control from Hungary, and by the initiation by Lord Rothermere of a campaign in the English newspapers owned by him for a revision of the Treaty of Trianon. Lord Rothermere's influence was over-estimated by the Magyars, who believed that the day of liberation was about to dawn immediately, and their heartfelt and buoyant rejoicings drew the States of the Little Entente together, and stiffened their intransigent attitude towards Hungary. Much more important than Lord Rothermere's agitation was the fact that the Italian Government now officially espoused the cause of Hungarian frontier revision. In his speech on foreign policy of 5th June, 1928 (the first delivered by him on the subject for two years), Signor Mussolini said that : " Hungary can rely on Italy's friendship. It may be said that the territorial provisions of the Treaty of Trianon have cut too deeply into the flesh, and it may be added that for a thousand years Hungary has performed in the Danubian Basin an historic mission of importance. The Hungarian people, with their fervent patriotism, their consciousness of their power, their persevering work in time of peace, deserve a better fate. Not only from

the point of view of universal equity, but also in the interest of Italy, it may be well that this better fate of Hungary should find its realization."

Almost equally encouraging to Hungary was the further remark, that "treaties were not eternal".

Since that date, her friendship with Italy remained the corner-stone of Hungarian foreign policy. It was, indeed, always stated that Hungary was bound by no obligations except those of friendship; that she retained a "free hand" to mould her policy as she desired. But few opportunities were lost to proclaim the friendship which now united the two peoples, and Italy helped Hungary materially whenever she found an opportunity. Italy was, however, herself a poor country, unable either to grant the loans for which the countries of South-Eastern Europe, Hungary not least among them, showed such marked proclivities, or to receive any substantial proportion of their export surpluses; the more so since those surpluses were mainly agrarian, and Signor Mussolini had devoted infinite pains to increasing the agricultural production of his own country. Germany was far more important as a market, Great Britain and France as financial centres. Her dependence on these material considerations made Hungary hesitate to commit herself too deeply to Italy; the more so as she was anxious to offend none of the great Western Powers, who, she always hoped, would in time come to see the justice of her cause.

After 1929 the material aspect of the question took on enhanced importance. The catastrophic fall in the price of cereals plunged Hungary, with the other agrarian States of South-Eastern Europe, into grave economic difficulties. The Little Entente had tried to save itself by closer economic co-operation between its members, but the attempt had broken down on the resistance of the Yugoslav and Roumanian

industrialists and above all, of the Czech agrarians. Thus 1930 saw the improbable spectacle of negotiations between Hungary, Roumania, and Yugoslavia, and later, between these States and Poland, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, and Esthonia, the formation of an agrarian bloc, followed by a combined *démarche* to the League of Nations.

This was the beginning of a very confused struggle in which the States of Central and South-Eastern Europe were pulled this way and that by the great Western Powers.

Politically the alignment, at least its main outlines, was already complete, and was governed primarily by the question of revision. This left the three States of the Little Entente, with Poland (although Poland, which is united by many ties of sympathy with Hungary, and has not always been on the best of terms with Czechoslovakia, would probably not object to a revision of the Hungarian frontiers if this did not endanger the general principle of the sanctity of treaties) sided with France against any revision, while Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria formed a less well-cemented revisionist bloc. Germany was, of course, equally set on revision, but the revision which she particularly desired in the Danube valley consisted of the "Anschluss", or Union of Austria with herself. Anxious as both Italy and Hungary were to see a real revision of the territorial provisions of the Treaties commence, yet this particular step would have been unwelcome to both, as neither wanted such a very powerful neighbour on her frontiers. Britain was politically almost neutral, sympathetic to many of the grievances of Germany, Austria, and Hungary, rather apprehensive of the overwhelming power of the Francophile bloc, but in principle insistent on the integrity of the Peace Treaties.

But besides this was the additional factor that most of the minor States, and Germany herself, were heavily indebted to both France and Great Britain. France, in particular, came during this period to occupy a position of extraordinary power, and she steadily maintained the principle that Hungary could only hope for her favour if she first reached an agreement with the Little Entente. Finally, every move towards freer economic exchange encountered intense opposition from vested interests in all countries.

It was those vested interests that caused the breakdown of the first combined efforts of the "agrarian bloc"—to dignify it by a name which it hardly lived to deserve. The proposals had been that European preference should be granted to European cereals; and this involved a derogation to the most-favoured-nation clause which other countries benefiting by that clause refused to grant.

The next step was the attempt made by Austria and Germany in the spring of 1931 to conclude a customs union. This aroused the utmost opposition, especially in France and Czechoslovakia, but also in Italy, and had to be renounced owing to French pressure. Equally unsuccessful was an alternative plan produced by France herself in May, 1931, that European States should grant preference to fixed quotas of cereals from the agrarian States of Central and Eastern Europe. Separate industrial agreements should be concluded and special credit facilities granted, while Austria was to receive special facilities to her trade.

After a dismal autumn during which the economic situation grew steadily worse, France in March, 1932, put forward a new plan for a closer association, not going so far as a customs union, between the five Danubian States. Germany promptly replied

that she ought to be included in any such economic formation, and Italy (who had concluded new commercial conventions with Austria and Hungary) that "direct understanding and measures of aid in individual cases" were preferable to larger schemes.

The Lausanne Conference of June, 1932, which provisionally settled the problem of reparations, provided for another special conference to deal with the problems of the Danube Basin. This met at Stresa in September, and made, in the main, two proposals: one for the creation of a currency normalization fund for the States of Central and South-Eastern Europe, the other for a fund to be devoted to the revalorization of the cereals exported by those States; the share to be contributed to this fund by each State being reduced in proportion to the advantages granted by it to the States in question under bilateral treaties for the importation of their cereals.

This plan met with exactly the same fate as all its predecessors, but formed the basis for an Italian memorandum, submitted to the League of Nations in September, 1933, which recommended procedure by bilateral treaties; preferential treatment for Danubian cereals and for Austrian industry, involving a derogation (to be kept within "reasonable limits") of the rights of third countries enjoying most-favoured-nation treatment, the Danubian countries to reserve an equitable proportion of their markets to non-Danubian countries granting them such preference; and the conclusion of measures to increase, and "direct into its natural channels" the flow of commerce of the Danubian countries, and to improve their balances of payments.

Meanwhile the countries concerned continued to exist, amid a chorus of prophecies of their early doom as loud, continuous, and monotonous as the

voice of frogs at sundown, by means of throttled imports, a dismally reduced standard of living, defaults on some of their debts and standstill agreements on most of the rest.

Early in 1933 the National Socialist party came into power in Germany, and spread terror in Europe by the anticipations which it awakened of a reinvigorated and aggressive Germany. A new German drive towards the south-east again seemed imminent. Herr Hitler announced his intention of incorporating Austria in Germany, and opened a whirlwind campaign of propaganda, threats, and minor violence to that end. Czechoslovakia, with her large German population, felt her existence threatened, and Italy was haunted by the vision of a mailed giant with the face and figure of General Göring scowling at her over the Brenner. The first immediate effect of Herr Hitler's rise to power was that the three States of the Little Entente concluded, on 16th February, 1933, a new Pact of Organization, with a permanent Council and Secretariat, with the purpose of achieving absolute uniformity in the foreign policy of the three States. The opposition between the revisionist and anti-revisionist groups was emphasized by Italy's attempt to secure acceptance for a "Four Power Pact" with (in its original form) a primary purpose of Treaty Revision.

In this new situation, Hungary seemed to have abandoned, at least for the moment, the tentative efforts at a rapprochement with the Successor States which had been begun on French initiative, and under the auspices of the League of Nations' "Commission of Inquiry for European Union". Co-operation between the Danubian States seemed as far off as ever.

Hungary was unwilling to abandon her claims to revision, while her neighbours abated nothing of

their intransigent refusal even to consider revision. Some members of the Left in Hungary pleaded that in spite of the political difficulties, economic considerations were so overwhelming that Hungary ought to swallow her pride. Her young and energetic Minister-President, General Gömbös, answered an argument along these lines in the following trenchant words :—

“ The Honourable Member ” (sc. M. Buchinger, Social Democrat) “ thinks we are conducting a policy of ‘ I’m cross with you ’. No, we are not doing that, although we should have reason enough. When I entered office, I said clearly and plainly that we are prepared, under certain conditions, to negotiate. But it is wrong to ask us to let our stomachs govern our policy in historic questions. Higher ideals must prevail in historic questions, and we shall follow them, and not our stomachs.”

The question remained, however, whether Hungary should orient herself rather to Germany or to Italy. So long as the French bloc remained overwhelmingly the strongest force in Europe, this question had been less important, since Italy and Germany were prepared to combine in their opposition to France. But with Germany active and strong, her Austrian policy was bound to clash with that of Italy ; and Hungary had to choose between them. Such a choice was not, perhaps, very easy for General Gömbös, who seemed to some extent attracted by German ideas and methods, while his Foreign Minister, M. de Kánya, was well known for his German sympathies. Moreover, the Italian orientation involved closer co-operation with Austria, which readily suggested the idea of a Habsburg restoration—an unwelcome thought to the Free Electors’ party represented by Gömbös and his Government. Nevertheless, it was impossible to sacrifice Italy’s friendship, while the danger of a

Germany reaching from the North Sea to the Leitha impressed the most Germanophile. Thus when the long German-Italian duel over Austria in the winter of 1933-4 ended temporarily in a success for Italy, Hungary was a co-signatory of the Rome Protocols of 18th March, 1934, under which Italy, Austria, and Hungary undertook to consult together, with a view to co-operation, in political questions, while in the economic field the commercial exchanges between the three countries should be developed and facilitated, traffic through the Adriatic ports fostered, and steps taken to overcome the difficulties of Austrian industry and Hungarian cereals.

It would, however, be rash to suppose that the Rome Protocols settled Hungary for ever in her allotted place in the political alignment of Europe. The present combination of Italy-Austria-Hungary has, of course, its justifications and its advantages. Speaking from a purely political, and still more from a sentimental point of view, Italy is a very suitable friend for Hungary. "The enemy of my enemy is my friend," and the two countries have a common interest at least in their distrust of Yugoslavia; while so long as the Franco-Italian rivalry subsists, and so long as Roumania and Czechoslovakia remain closely connected with France, the same thing applies, perhaps, rather less directly, to those two countries. On broader lines still, Hungary appeals to Italy's sympathies in her historic role of spear-head of the resistance to Slavonic penetration, as the barrier which separates the Northern from the Southern branches of the Slav race. Nor are more purely sentimental considerations to be ignored: a certain similarity of character in the delight taken by both nations in ceremonial and somewhat exuberant manifestations of feeling; and the powerful historic tradition, dating from

St. Stephen's day, when Rome saved Hungary's independence.

Finally, Italy can hardly play King Stork to Hungary, as she has done to her fellow-protégé, Albania. It is impossible to imagine Italian penetration north of the Alps becoming a threat to Hungary.

On the other hand, Italy has little of substance to offer Hungary. She is herself poor, and will certainly not find it easy to absorb a large amount of Hungary's export surplus. In 1928 Italy supplied only 4.0 per cent. of Hungary's total imports, and received only 3.5 per cent. of her exports. She has, moreover, no common frontier with Hungary, and would find it difficult to combine effectively with her in war.

With Austria included in the bloc, some of these disadvantages are removed. Austria and Hungary maintain close commercial relations ; in 1928 Austria was third on the list of countries supplying Hungary's imports, ranking, with 16.2 per cent., after Czechoslovakia with 22.4 per cent. and Germany with 19.5 per cent. She was easily Hungary's chief market, taking 34.1 per cent. of her total exports. But looked at from the Austrian end, Hungary is less important than either Czechoslovakia or Germany. The economic relations between the two countries might, and perhaps will be made closer, but the fact remains that as a bloc, Italy-Austria-Hungary is geographically unwieldy, and economically certainly not predestined. Politically, too, one would hesitate to prophesy for it a very long life. The Burgenland may not prove an insuperable cause of dispute, although Hungary has yet to renounce it, or Austria to offer to restore it ; but it remains to be seen whether the "Austrian independence" which both Italy and Hungary desire to see maintained will prove an active ideal or a mere negation of German

national sentiment. If the latter, then the bloc has not long to survive.

Hungary's national connections are all with her immediate neighbours, particularly Austria and Czechoslovakia. However cogent the political considerations may have been which led to the dismemberment of the old Hungary, the present map of the Middle Danube Basin remains a geographical and economic monstrosity. A sad proof of the essential identity of interests of all the States composing it is the uniformity, as regards manner and tempo alike, with which they slid down the slippery path when the great economic crisis broke out.

Czechoslovakia proved the only exception; and what saved her was not Slovakia, but Bohemia. Even Czechoslovakia cannot cut herself loose from her neighbours, as was shown by the very serious consequences for both her and Hungary alike entailed by their recent tariff war. What separates Hungary from her neighbours to-day is the purely political consideration of the non-accepted frontiers.

It is a question whether this must always be so. At the time of writing (1934) the gulf between the revisionists and the non-revisionists seems so wide as to exclude any possibility of bridging it. And it is true that the Middle Danube Basin is not only a unity, but also a union of contrasting elements: the plain and the mountain; and the race inhabiting the plain has never in history lived on friendly and equal terms with its neighbours of the periphery, but has either dominated them, or disappeared under their pressure. Yet the Magyars have proved themselves more enduring and more adaptable than any of the other Eastern invaders, and a solution of their relations with their neighbours may yet be found.

The great question-mark is Germany. The

relations of the Magyars with the Germans have been more intimate than with any other race. From the Germans they received inestimable cultural gifts, and German support helped them for long periods to maintain their position against the local Slavs and Roumanians. On the other hand, the German has also been the most powerful of all potential enemies to the Magyar nationality. Germany is the only great Power among Hungary's neighbours which might threaten her existence, German penetration is far more dangerous to her national identity than Slavonic penetration.

Throughout her history Hungary has always been at once attracted and repelled by Germany; and this is true also to-day. The two nations have important economic relations, which would be more important still if Austria united with Germany. The German market could easily absorb most of Hungary's exports of cereals, and supply her with most of her needs of industrial products. Germany and Hungary have, moreover, a common interest in Treaty revision.

Apart, therefore, from Hungary's desire to keep open so important a market, there has since the War been a widespread feeling that if Hungary threw in her lot with Germany, the resulting bloc might be so powerful as to force through treaty revision. Thus a certain party has urged the formation of what would be, frankly, an alliance for *revanche*. This is a possibility for the future which cannot be excluded.

On the other hand, there is a deep-rooted fear of Germany, as well as an inherited dislike among certain circles, due to the experience of Austrian days. A Germany which had attained her national aims would have incorporated Austria. The Burgenland would be lost for ever; perhaps even some

further strips of German-speaking territory in Western Hungary would follow it. But even more than this, Hungary would be practically at Germany's mercy, and not all Magyars are satisfied that mercy could be accorded. Would not Hungary become a mere satellite, exploited and exposed?

There is just a possibility that the resurrection of Germany may bring about a radical change in the whole position. Already it has greatly reduced the acuteness of the Franco-Italian rivalry. The Little Entente—Czechoslovakia at least—is as greatly threatened as Hungary; indeed, Czechoslovakia is probably exceedingly grateful to Italy, and incidentally to Hungary, for pulling the chestnut of Austrian independence out of the fire for her. It is not wholly out of the question that the pressure from Germany might bring the States of the Middle Danube Basin together in common defence against a common danger, in a bloc which made some concession to Hungary's aspirations.

PAST AND FUTURE

The immutability of Hungary's political and social institutions has long been a source of pride to their admirers, of exasperation to those on whom they press more hardly. It is, at any rate, difficult to withhold admiration from a structure which has shown itself able to withstand alike assaults from without and reform from inside, without altering its essential character. For not only did Hungary keep her constitution substantially intact against all the Habsburgs' efforts to destroy it, but when she herself modernized it in the middle of the nineteenth century, shedding in one magnificent gesture the trappings of the medieval State, the new conditions which she created proved to differ singularly little from the old. Legal distinctions were abolished, names were changed; but the old "nation", its composition but very slightly altered, remained all-powerful. The changes made between 1867 and 1918 were trifling, those between 1919 and 1933 hardly more important.

But beneath the unmoved surface, great economic and demographic forces, which no politician can control beyond a certain measure, have been at work. Since 1867, and even more since 1918, Hungary has undergone a great transformation, and the problems which now confront her rulers are entirely different from those with which previous generations had to deal.

A certain social readjustment followed immediately on the political reforms of the nineteenth century. In the country, some of the wealthier peasants

took their place in the ranks of the traditional landlord class. A larger number of needy gentry, whom only the excessively complex system of land tenure had kept in their positions, sank to peasant level or, more frequently, migrated to the towns. The old Swabian bourgeoisie became Magyarized, and the Jews took their place as Hungary's main alien element.

But these changes were not accompanied by any important political alterations. The March Laws themselves were modified by subsequent enactments, or interpreted in a modified sense, and even where they permitted a genuine democracy, the classes which should have profited by them were not in a position to do so. Thus the old ruling classes remained in power, and if they became conscious now and again of a potential threat to their position from the masses below, this only caused them to adopt more stringent measures of repression.

The real threat to the old system came, however, not from below, but from the industrialization of the country.

This took place only very gradually. The Compromise of 1867 had still been concluded on the assumption that Hungary's role in the Dual Monarchy would be to supply food-stuffs to the Austrian provinces, receiving manufactured articles from them in return. The "uniform customs frontier" which, under the Compromise, surrounded the Monarchy, was fixed according to Austrian wishes and was too low to permit the growth of an independent Hungarian industry, beyond processes such as milling which were very closely connected with agricultural production. The arrangement suited the Hungarian land-owners admirably, and the Government made no more than trivial use of such opportunities as it retained of fostering agriculture. In 1868 it spent only 2,128 crowns, or less than

£90, on the "minor measures" at its disposal; and of these, 2,000 crowns were devoted to instruction and only 128, or under £5, to direct support for industry.

The figures, however, grew year by year. Towards the end of the century, the great agricultural depression which had become chronic in Europe compelled recognition of the fact that the standard of living to be obtained from agriculture was far below that of industry. Moreover, the generation which had concluded the Compromise was dying out, and its successors did not want to see Hungary dependent in any way on Austria. Industrialization seemed an ideal policy for Hungary. She possessed ample natural resources, nicely balanced, and a skilfully planned policy promised to give her not only increased wealth, but also enhanced national solidarity. Thus a campaign for industrialization began in the '90s which grew intense after 1900, and particularly after the passage of an important Act in 1907 which offered industry advantages in the shape of exemption from taxation, reduction of freights, and even direct subsidies. By 1914 Hungary was producing three-quarters of her own industrial needs. She was still predominantly agricultural, but she now possessed an important entrepreneur and middle class, and a growing industrial proletariat.

The Treaty of Trianon again altered the situation. Hungary lost almost exactly half her factories and half her industrial workers. As she lost well over half her total population, the percentage of population engaged in mining, industry, commerce, and transport actually rose from 23·5 per cent. to 30·1 per cent., the figures for industry alone being respectively 16·3 per cent. and 24·6 per cent. This did not, however, in itself give an impetus to industrialization, for the effect of the Treaty was to make

Hungary *naturally* more of an agricultural country than before. In spite of the loss of the rich Bácska and Banat, she retained 43 per cent. of her total previous arable land (against 32·7 of her total area), over 45 per cent. of her wheat-growing area, 63 per cent. of her area under rye, etc. On the other hand, she lost over 85 per cent. of her forests, practically all her water-power, nearly all her iron ore, and all or practically all of her other metals. The only important industrial product most of which she retained was lignite. Similarly, the factories engaged directly on prime materials were, for the most part, assigned to the Successor States, while what was left to Hungary consisted largely of the finishing industries situated in the centre of the country, which had previously drawn their material from the periphery.

While many of Hungary's factories were now cut off from their sources of material, others again had lost their markets, and a big readjustment of the national economic life was clearly called for. It seemed as though much of the work of the previous decades would have to be undone; and in fact, a very large number of firms were ruined in the period following the War. But this did not mean the cessation of industrialization. Sheer pressure of population, if nothing else, would have forced its continuance. The density of population had been increased under the Treaty from 64·2 per square kilometre for the old Hungary in 1910, to 86 for Trianon Hungary in 1920, and is well over 90 to-day; for although the birth-rate is falling rather rapidly, the main outlets for emigration have now been stopped. Industrialization was not so easy as before; instead of utilizing the resources of a well-balanced natural unit, Hungary was forced to develop many industries which had little or no

affinity with her natural resources. She had, however, little choice, particularly as the Successor States were determined to break the old economic connections leading across the new frontiers, so as to destroy the economic argument for Treaty revision.

A new autonomous tariff of distinctly protective nature was therefore introduced, and new industries sprang up, some of them, notably the textile industry, reaching considerable dimensions. The process was further accelerated by the great fall in agricultural prices which set in in 1929, and from which the world has not yet recovered. Hungary's industry had not attained enough efficiency to compete seriously on the world market, and her exports remained predominantly agricultural, the main items being cereals, livestock, and animal products, which in normal years went in large quantities to Austria and Czechoslovakia.

The export prices of cereals, at their new low values, no longer realized enough to pay for Hungary's industrial imports, and for the service of her loans, which, owing partly to the necessary reconstruction and partly to a certain amount of further borrowing which had not always been kept within the wisest of limits, now amounted to a considerable fraction of the budget. It therefore became necessary to throttle imports drastically, and this naturally threw a greater burden upon, and offered increased opportunities to, Hungarian industry.

As a result of this long process, Hungary has ceased to-day to be an agricultural country in the strict sense of the word. She is a country of mixed agricultural and industrial economy, standing in a middle position: agricultural compared with Western Europe, industrial by comparison with her neighbours on the South and East. It seems

clear, moreover, that the process of industrialization must continue yet further. From the world point of view it is uneconomic, but so are the political frontiers in Central and South-Eastern Europe. Revision on the large scale, up to some, at least, of the natural frontiers would allow a more rational exploitation of the resources of the area. The same result could be achieved were Hungary to make a definite renunciation of her revisionist hopes, and could her neighbours convince themselves sufficiently of her sincerity; neither of these consummations is, however, likely to be achieved in the near future. It is possible that more favourable commercial treaties, such as are now envisaged with Austria, may reduce the amount of uneconomic autarchy found necessary; but it is practically certain that for many years to come Hungary will have to live in a forced self-sufficiency, with a comparatively small turnover of foreign trade, and will have to maintain a large number of industries which could be eliminated under a more rational organization of the world.

The second factor necessitating the continuance of industrialization is the pressure of population on the land. A drastic agrarian reform would enable the soil to support in decency a larger population than at present; and sooner or later such a reform is bound to come. This would, however, still further reduce Hungary's export surplus and would therefore in its turn call for further restriction of imports, which could only be achieved by further industrialization.

The adjustment of the rival claims of industry and agriculture constitutes one of Hungary's chief problems to-day. Agriculture, besides its traditional importance, remains by far the largest single industry in Hungary, and occupies a unique position

in her economy as her only important exporting industry—a position from which it is not in the least likely to be deposed. Her commercial policy must always be governed chiefly by the interests of her agriculture. Her exports have, of course, to pay not only for her imports, but also for the service of her foreign debt which, if lower than that of many countries, is still considerable.¹ This fact gives not only Hungary herself, but also her creditors, which are, of course, mainly industrial countries, a particular interest in her agriculture, and accounts for the interest taken by many foreign countries in the various proposals to secure an economic price for Central European agricultural produce, particularly wheat.

On the other hand, the fall in agricultural prices, particularly those of cereals, has been so catastrophic in recent years that at present agriculture in Hungary is the weakest part of her economy, just as it is in other and specifically industrial countries. The price index for agrarian produce as a whole at the end of 1933 was no more than 46·5, taking the prosperous years 1925-7 as 100, or 68·3 as compared with July, 1931 (the beginning of the great financial crisis). This extraordinary fall has practically deprived half of Hungary's total population of purchasing power of any kind. Those possessed of a sufficient holding to make themselves self-sufficient live in an abundance at least of bread, and usually of wine, poultry, and meat. Even the largest land-owners, however, have little more than this, while the landless population subsists almost entirely on a pittance of maize or rye flour received, often in

¹ In June, 1931, the external public debt amounted to 1,949 million Swiss francs; the other external public debts to 1,825 million. The service of the external debt was 116 million, out of a budget expenditure (1931-2) of 1,237. The trade balance in 1931 was active to the extent of 16 million francs only.

kind, for harvest work. The greater part of this population has gradually slipped back, under the influence of the crisis, into something like a premonetary area. Each family lives a practically self-contained existence, and where the family resources fail, the village arranges a rough division of labour based on payment in kind. An interesting recent article in the Press described village life to-day, as conducted on this system; almost the only article, it was stated, for which the villagers disbursed hard cash was tombstones for the deceased. The Government itself has been forced to adapt itself to circumstances and to accept a quota of the almost universal arrears of taxation in the form of cereals, while for private debts moratoria have had to be declared.

Industry has proved much more resistant. It has kept up to a price level of 79.5, compared with 1925-7, or 92.9 compared with 1931. Even industrial wages have not fallen nearly so sharply as the average remuneration of persons engaged in agriculture. It was calculated at the beginning of the crisis that the average annual income per head derived from industry was already more than double that from agriculture (1,200 pengö against 500) and this disparity has undoubtedly since increased. Industry is thus by far the most solvent item in Hungarian economy, and the main source from which the Government can draw its revenue. This fact makes the great cartels, which now dominate much of Hungarian industry, together with the large holding banks which stand behind them, probably the most powerful factor in the country's economic life.

On the other hand, since Hungarian industry produces almost entirely for the internal market, the relative stability of its price levels is not wholly a matter for congratulation. The absence of purchasing power in the agricultural population has

gravely affected industrial production. After its large rise in the relatively prosperous years after the War, it sank again seriously after 1929, and in 1932 the index figure of production was only 60, compared with 1927. In 1933, it showed a tendency to revive, but only a slight one.¹ Unemployment and short time on a large scale have resulted.

The relatively high industrial prices, which are widely ascribed to the price policy of the cartels, have not only caused much embitterment, but have strengthened the argument that agriculture is still, after all, the basic factor in Hungarian economy, since its prosperity so largely governs that of industry. Various attempts have been made to redress the balance, such as the institution of the "boletta", a premium on cereals marketed. This device pleased no one except the large land-owners, for even the small peasants calculated that they lost more than they gained by it, while industry complained of the burden and consumers in general of the consequent enhanced prices. It was, however, retained year after year as a counsel less of wisdom than of despair.

The final solution of Hungary's economic problems came only through world events, which she will be unable seriously to affect by her own policy. She can herself do little more than fortify her national structure, to be prepared to seize the opportunity when it arises. Whether the strength of her existing institutions will help her to do so, or their rigidity hinder her, is the great political problem of her future.

¹ The figures quoted are those given by the League of Nations *Statistical Yearbook*. Mr. Royall Tyler, in his quarterly reports on Hungary to the League, gives the higher figures of 91.8 per cent. for 1931, 74.4 per cent. for 1932, and 89.1 per cent. for 1933 (1927: 100). These figures are based on quantity.

Strongly as the interests of industry and agriculture often clash, their leading representatives have managed hitherto to keep their dispute between themselves. The new forces of industry and finance have not thought it necessary, or even desirable, to try to alter the existing system. Socially and in public political life they have kept a modest pace behind the great land-owners, to whom they have been content to leave the shadow of the power, while themselves gradually usurping a large part of the shadow. The land-owners, on the other hand, have been content to see the range of interests represented in the ruling circles widened, so long as the circle itself remained suitably closed to outsiders.

But the problem will not be exhausted even by an amicable adjustment of the relations between the large agrarian interests on the one hand, and those of industry and finance on the other. Hungary also possesses to-day a considerable and growing industrial proletariat, besides the great army of landless or almost landless peasants and agricultural labourers. These are forces which are at present little able to make their voices heard, but they are not nearly so resigned as they were in the past. In the old days the man of enterprise, who found the system intolerable, had the resource of emigration. This outlet has now been closed, and those who would formerly have left Hungary for a better land are to-day more determined to make Hungary a better land to stay in.

Most important of all, perhaps, spiritually, although numerically far weaker than the urban or rural proletariat, is the growing host of impoverished intellectuals. Up to a comparatively recent period, the greater part of the university-trained youth was accommodated without great difficulty in the

Government services, while the free professions, not yet overcrowded, absorbed the remainder. To-day the situation is entirely different. Year after year the Universities and High Schools turn out thousands of young men and women for whom there is literally no place in the economic system. Although the Government makes every effort to find places for as many as it can, yet the economic state of the country is such as absolutely to forbid the old elastic system which could always find one job more for a youth of good connections and reliable opinions. The professions are overcrowded and the rewards which they offer are miserable in the extreme.

Hitherto the circle of power has remained, if not absolutely closed, yet something very like it. The open suffrage in the country districts, the strict surveillance on labour in the towns, the restrictions on freedom of association, speech, and the press still remain unmodified, and leave Hungary open to the reproach of class domination.

When General Gömbös assumed office in 1932, many believed that more radical changes were impending. Gömbös is a young man, a man of great courage and determination and, as his past record proves, no respecter of persons. He was believed to have Fascist sympathies, and his advent to power was regarded with considerable apprehension, not merely by the workers but also by the magnates and prelates, and by the representatives of capital.

Gömbös is, indeed, fond of emphasizing his intention of making of Hungary a unified nation, animated by a common national will, against which no private ambitions or vested interests, high or low, shall be allowed to prevail. It seems likely that he will not hesitate to deal drastically with

any opposition which he believes it necessary in the national interest to crush, and he has already taken pains to provide himself with a reliable machinery for the purpose. Yet he has shown no signs of wishing to imitate either Stalin, Mussolini, or Hitler. He has frequently declared himself a believer in the virtues of private enterprise and of the capitalist system, and as regards the Jewish capitalists in particular he made, on assuming office, a most courageous recantation of his somewhat *mouvémenté* past. Constitutionally, he has maintained the forms and at least as much of the substance as most Premiers in a powerful position.

His declared policy with regard to certain reforms seems to show a disinclination to embark on rash social experiment. He has shown no intention of touching the existing system of land tenure, beyond adumbrating a modest plan of land settlement. The Parliament which he desires to see is one which "truly respects Hungarian national public opinion, and at the same time represents all working classes of the country". Electoral reform, on the basis of the secret ballot, is necessary—"while at the same time the great national ideals of the Hungarian people must be safeguarded" (it may be mentioned that Gömbös is committed by many pledges to introduce the secret ballot). Personal liberty is to be secured "so far as it is not detrimental to the interests of the nation as a whole". The right of combination and assembly is to be governed by the principle that the first duty of all Societies and associations is "to constitute directly or indirectly towards the increase of the national strength". "The safeguarding of the liberty of the Press is a national asset—so long as the Press is faithfully serving the interests of the nation."

After a few months, Hungary came to see that

the hopes and fears of drastic changes which Gömbös's advent to power had aroused had alike been exaggerated, and that he was sincere when he repudiated not only revolutionary tendencies, but even the name of Liberal. The essential of General Gömbös's system is that it establishes the Magyar gentry firmly as the rulers of Hungary. Gömbös himself, in his origin, his upbringing, and even his religion is a typical representative of this class; and it seems clear that when he emphasizes (as he is fond of doing) the Conservative basis of his political creed, he is simply expressing his conviction that the class which he represents is that which is called by history and tradition to defend and to guide Hungary's fortunes, at home and abroad.

It is not difficult, especially for those trained in the schools of Western liberalism and democracy, to criticize this assumption. It would be ludicrous to pretend that Hungary bears any resemblance to what we understand by a democracy, the essential basis of which is that all shades of opinion should be equally free to express themselves and have an equal right, if they can command enough support to determine policy. Hungary's political system is frankly that of an oligarchy, partly Parliamentary, partly bureaucratic, and the greater part of the population is not only disenfranchised in all but name, but not even free to express its discontents.

Yet it would be unfair to judge Hungary by the standards of any thought but her own. Every nation, in the long run, gets the form of government which it desires, as well as that which it deserves. If it is not wholly untrue that General Gömbös, as his critics declare, is somewhat apt to identify his class and his party with the nation, so that when he appeals for national unity, he is asking only for support for his own party, yet in doing so

he is following an immemorial tradition which is not purely arbitrary. The millennial endurance of the oligarchic system in Hungary cannot be explained on any other assumption than that it is peculiarly adapted to Magyar psychology. The forces of Conservatism are undoubtedly extraordinarily powerful in the country; not only among the older generation, which knew the period of Habsburg rule, the War, and the revolutions, and in whose minds the natural aversion from experiment was immediately fortified by the unhappy experiences of 1918 and 1919 (as the violence of the subsequent reaction proved), but also among many of the younger generation of intellectuals.

For this reason it would be rash to prophesy an early end to the present system. It may well be that General Gömbös is correct in his belief that Hungary will be able to evolve her future organically out of her past. It is overwhelmingly probable that even if large changes come about, the leader who will carry them through will be drawn, like all Hungary's great leaders of the past, from the ranks of that class which has always represented the Magyar "nation".

Yet the task of this leader, if he is to bring about a true national unity and not one which is only apparent, will not be easy. He may succeed in keeping intact the old structure and institutions, but he will have to pour new life into them. Hungary to-day is facing some of the most difficult problems in her history. Externally, there is the supreme question of adjusting her relations with her neighbours. At home, the altered economic conditions have given rise to problems the solution of which cannot long be delayed. The situation of the dwarf holders and landless peasantry, of industrial labour, and of a large part of the intelligentsia is

so miserable as to be almost unendurable ; and the revolt against material wretchedness is aggravated by a general feeling of social injustice. These less fortunate classes are still politically too untrained, too disunited, and too effectively controlled to produce policies, or even leaders ; particularly among the younger intelligentsia, most of whom are themselves drawn from the gentry class or the Jewish bourgeoisie, one is chiefly conscious of uncertainty, of an unhappy groping, of a mind which sees the evil but not the remedy. Herein lies the present strength of the existing regime, which need hardly fear revolt from below. Its deeper weakness springs from the same cause, that for lack of timely pressure it may misjudge what degree of reform is really necessary.

Thus although the immediate future of Hungary seems to lie along the well-trodden paths of tradition, the more distant future is difficult to foretell. Only one thing can be prophesied confidently : that somehow or other, the way will be found.

The history of the Magyars is truly a romance, and a most gallant one. Strangers in a strange land, a small people surrounded by vast nations, an outpost precariously stationed on Europe's most exposed bastion, condemned to ceaseless struggle against assault from every side, they have resisted, survived, and even grown strong where any nation less virile and less proudly conscious of its historic mission must have perished off the face of the earth. Thus, if to-day they are passing through a dark period of their fortunes, they are right in refusing to despair. They have faced ill-fortune before, and overcome it. They will do so again.

CONCORDANCE OF NAMES

M = Magyar, G = German, C = Czech or Slovak, R = Rumanian,
S = Serb or Croat

Bácska (M), Bačka (S).
Balaton (M), Plattensee (G).
Bartócza (M), Bistritza (R), Bistritz (G).
Brassó (M), Braşov (R), Kronstadt (G).
Buda (M), Ofen (G).
Cegléd (M), Zitay Ostrov (C), Große Schütt Imel (G).
Eger (M), Eriauf (G).
Eszek (M), Essek (G), Osiak (S).
Esztergom (M), Gran (G).
Fertő (M), Neusiedlensee (G).
Győr (M), Raab (G) (town).
Gyulafehérvár (M), Alba Julia (R), Karlsburg (G).
Ipoly (M), Ipel (G), Eipel (G).
Karlóczy (M), Karlóvci (S), Karlowitz (G).
Kassa (M), Košice (C), Kaschau (G).
Komárom (M), Komárno (C), Komorn (G).
Kis Mátyás (M), Eisenstadt (G).
Kolozsvár (M), Cluj (R), Klausenburg (G).
Nagy-Károlyi (M), Carei (R).
Nagy-Szamos (M), Somersul Mare (R).
Nagy-Szeben (M), Sibiu (R), Hermannstadt (G).
Nagy-Váradi (M), Oradea Mare (R), Grosswardein (G).
Nyitra (M), Nitra (C), Neutra (G).
Pozsony (M), Bratislava (C), Pressburg (G).
Rába (M), Raab (G) (river).
Sopron (M), Oedenburg (G).
Szabadka (M), Subotica (S), Mariatheresienpol (G).
Szentmár (M), Satu Mare (R).
Szekesfehérvár (M), Stuhlweissenburg (G).
Szepes (M), Spiš (C), Zips (G).
Szombathely (M), Steinamanger (G).
Temesvár (M), Timisoara (R).
Tisza (M), Theiss (G).
Trencsen (M), Trenčín (C), Trentschin (G).
Tunócz Szentmárton (M), Turčiansky Svätý Martin (C).
Vá (M), Váh (C), Waag (G).
Varád (M), Varazdin (S), Warazdin (G).

PROPER NAMES

Endre = Andrew.
Erzébet = Elisabeth.
György = George.
Gyula = Julius.
Imre = Emeric.
István = Stephen.
János = John.
Lajos = Louis.
László = Ladislaus.
Kálmán = Coloman.
Mihály = Michael.
Miklós = Nicholas.
Pál = Paul.
Sándor = Alexander.

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Map of HUNGARY

Frontier prior to 1920
shewn thus: - - - - -

Frontier since 1920
shewn thus: - - - - -

Rivers: ————

Railways: ······

Scale of Miles. 0 50 100

